This book is valuable and
NOT to be ISSUED
out of the Library
without Special Permission

RUSSIAN

EDITED BY

D. TALBOT RICE

WATSON GORDON PROFESSOR OF FINE ART,
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

PUBLISHED IN CONNECTION WITH
THE EXHIBITION OF RUSSIAN ART,
BELGRAVE SQUARE, LONDON, 1935

NEY AND JACKSON
LONDON: 33 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
EDINBURGH: TWEEDDALE COURT
1935

MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
OLIVER AND BOYD LTD., EDINBURGH

EDITOR'S NOTE

THIS small book is published in connection with the exhibition of Russian art, to be opened at No. 1 Belgrave Square, London, on 4th June. It is primarily intended to help those who visit the exhibition to understand and appreciate what they see there more fully than would otherwise be possible, since our knowledge of Russian art in this country is still in most cases extremely vague. Yet, in spite of the fact that it does not contain sections on the most modern productions of Russian artists, whether inside or outside Russia—space forbade the inclusion of such works at the exhibition—it is hoped that the book may serve a more general need, since no small up-to-date work dealing with the subject as a whole exists in English.

When mentioned in connection with the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the name "St Petersburg" has been retained; when mentioned in connection with museums that are still to be visited, the more modern "Leningrad" has been used.

The system of transliteration of names follows, with a few exceptions, that suggested by a committee of the British Academy in 1916 (see *Proceedings*, vol. viii).

Editor's Note

Sections 1, 2, 6, 7 and 9 were written in English The others were translated from the Russian, and the editor takes this opportunity of thanking his wife, who was responsible for the work He also desires to express his thanks to all contributors, and especially to Mr Alexander Polovtsoff, without whose help the various writers could hardly have been gathered together

CONTENTS

1	Russian Art—An Appreciation Tancred Borenius, Ph D, D Litt, During-Lawrence Professor of the History of Art, University College, London	1
2	An Historical Survey Alexander Polovtsoff	9
3	The Periods and Schools of Early Russian Painting Paul Muratoff	23
4	Art in the Eighteenth Century Alexander Benois, formerly Director of the Picture Gallery, Hermitage Museum	43
5	Early Nineteenth Century Painting Serge Ernst	61
6	Decorative Art—Theatre and Ballet Tamara Talbot Rice	71
7	Textiles A F Kendrick	85
8	Metal Work and Enamels Leon Grinberg	95
9	The Art of the Book Paul Apostol	115
10	Porcelain Alexander Popoff	127
	Table of Emperors and Dates	135

LIST OF PLATES

(*At End of Volume*)

PLATE

I Icon, the Virgin and Child, "Umilenie" (Tenderness) School of Andrew Rublev Late fifteenth century (Zolotnitzky Collection, Paris)

II Church of the Protection of the Virgin, Nerli River, near Vladimir 1165

III Wooden Church of the Transfiguration at Kiji, Province of Olonetsk Early eighteenth century

IV (*a*) Model for the Convent of Smolny, 1749 (Academy, Leningrad)
(*b*) Country House, near Rostov Second half of the eighteenth century

V Portrait of Mademoiselle Borschov, by D Levitski 1776 (Peterhof Palace)

VI (*a*) Portrait of Ivan Ribeaupierre (1750 1790), by D Levitski
(*b*) Bust of P Zavadovski, 1794, by T I Shubin (Academy, Leningrad)

VII The Horsewoman, 1832, by K P Brullov (Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow)

VIII The Admiralty Quay, St Petersburg, 1815, by T Alekseev

IX Setting for 'A Month in the Country," by M Dobuzhinski.

X (*a*) Chasuble, dated 1587 (Palace of Arms, Moscow) Formerly in the Sacristy of the Patriarchate
(*b*) Tray, in White Enamel, with Ornament in Silver Second half of the eighteenth century (Mr and Mrs D Talbot Rice.)

List of Plates

PLATE

XI (*a*) Gold Censer, dated 1598 (From a copy in the Victoria and Albert Museum)

(*b*) Silver Bowl, with Decoration in Painted Enamel Second half of the seventeenth century (Zolotnitzky Collection, Paris)

XII Porcelain Figures Imperial Factory, St Petersburg About 1780

Figure to left Ice-vendor, from series, "Cries of St Petersburg"
Middle Inhabitants of Russia the Eskimo
To right Inhabitants of Russia the Kalmuk

(From the collection of Lieut.-Colonel Popoff)

RUSSIAN ART—AN APPRECIATION

By Tancred Borenius

It is a truism that in order to arrive at a full understanding of the art of any given country, it is essential that you should get a first hand acquaintance of that art in the setting where it arose and developed That has, unfortunately, in the past, owing to a variety of circumstances, never been easy of attainment for anyone in Western Europe taking an interest in Russian art, nor can the present—for a number of reasons which need not here be gone into—be regarded as a particularly propitious moment for studying Russian art on the spot Even that elementary acquaintance with, shall we say, the art treasures of Italy, which every commentator on Italian art can more or less take for granted when addressing himself to European readers of average culture, is hence something which a writer on Russian art in general may only presuppose among a handful of people in the West, and it is far from easy to suggest something which, in the absence of that first hand personal contact, can help towards giving a mental picture of the artistic face of Russia Perhaps some pages in the novels of Tolstoy—notably in *War and Peace*—go further than anything else towards suggesting that mental image though even in the case of so graphic an author it is but little that can be achieved when every personal experience at first hand is lacking

I have here touched upon one of the major difficulties encountered by one who at this time of

day sets out to write an appreciation of Russian art in general, addressed to English readers, and another such difficulty springs from the fact that Russian art, during the thousand years or so of its existence, does not present a picture of any great homogeneousness, to find a common denominator for the various tendencies which may be traced in this chapter of art history is hardly feasible The descent, in the main, of Russian civilisation from Byzantium counts, of course, for a great deal to that may be traced that love for splendid display, for striking, sumptuous effects, which provides the keynote for the bulk of Russian architecture, painting and the products of Russian industrial art Further than this, no critic who knows his subject would probably like to go, in committing himself to generalities, and an appreciation of Russian art must therefore in the main follow the course of historical development

Whoever writes on Russian art must inevitably at the outset attempt to define his attitude towards the æsthetic problem of the Russian Ikon for it is in the Ikons that Russia's artistic connection with Byzantium is perhaps most plainly and patently visible, and for many centuries the history of Russian painting is to us, indeed, practically coincident with the history of the Ikon There exists, perhaps, no category of artistic production in which, as a result of stereotyped and almost mechanical mass production in comparatively recent times, the artistically insignificant predominates numerically as much as it does in the case of the totality of the Russian Ikons, and those whose acquaintance does not go beyond the type of work just characterised may be readily forgiven if they

do not adopt a very appreciative attitude towards the Russian Ikon It is, therefore, most important to lay the strongest possible stress on the fact, that the early history of the Ikon is concerned with æsthetic values of extraordinarily high order, whether it be the case of artists whose names are known to us—like that great Moscow contemporary of Lorenzo Monaco and Fra Angelico, Andrew Rublew (*c* 1370 *c* 1430)—or those much more numerous masters who are still, and probably ever will remain, covered by the cloak of anonymity Examples of the earlier Ikon painting of Russia are but seldom met with in Western Europe, but the Exhibition of Russian art, in connection with which the present volume is published, will contain a representative series of such examples, drawn from the available sources, which in themselves should suffice to make the exhibition a memorable one and help to remove prejudices which it is to be feared are still lingering in many minds

In the present connection, it must suffice to make only a brief reference to the very notable achievements in architecture which were realised on Russian soil during the centuries preceding the epoch of Peter the Great—achievements now represented to us mainly either by simple village churches in wood, of which not a few still survive, enlivening the lonely countryside with their picturesque and characteristic silhouettes, or by those great and elaborate structures in the great cities, of which the church of Vasili Blajenny in Moscow (1560) stands out as the most strikingly exotic and fantastic example

The gradual infiltration into Russia of foreign artistic elements and foreign artists which had been

taking place for many a long year—always, in fact—was succeeded in the reign of Peter the Great by a wholesale importation of artists and artistic ideals from Western Europe, and so immense were the material resources of Russia, and so vast the possibilities opened up there, that we can easily picture to ourselves how for generations to come, the chance of receiving a summons to work in Russia must have represented a most desirable goal for the ambition of ever so many Western artists—drawn in the event mainly from Italy and France, though Germany and Great Britain also helped to swell their ranks It is symptomatic of the spirit which governed Peter the Great's enterprises that his new capital, St Petersburg, was not, like Philip II's Madrid, a humble township raised to greater dignity, but actually something which had to be created entirely from the beginning—a city, indeed, which in the year of its foundation (1703) was situated on territory which still technically formed part of the kingdom of Sweden Three long and prosperous reigns in the eighteenth century—those of Peter the Great (1689 1725), Elizabeth (1741 61), and Catherine the Great (1762 96)—denote the main successive stages of a building activity, which, if principally concentrated in St Petersburg and its immediate neighbourhood, yet, of course, touched other parts of Russia as well, and virtually the same spirit of architectural enterprise—in the sense of Jacob Burckhardt s term *Baugesinnung*—continued to be essentially characteristic of the two first reigns of the nineteenth century—those of Alexander I (1801 25) and his brother Nicholas I (1825 55) Baroque, Rococo, and Neo Classicism thus all came to be represented at

care, producing an edifice which is affectionately remembered by anyone who knew it whilst still containing—before its tragic dissipation recently begun and still continuing—that queen among the picture galleries of Europe, the collection of which Catherine the Great was the virtual founder and which as far back as 1779 absorbed the famous picture gallery of the Walpoles from Houghton Hall

I have chosen three examples, illustrating the work of architects belonging to three different nationalities and this cosmopolitanism is eminently characteristic of architectural activity in Russia during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, even if native Russian artists were not long in coming to the fore (indeed, it was a Russian, A F Kokorinov, who built the Academy of Arts designed by Vallin de la Motte) Whatever their nationality, it was, however, the various great international styles of Europe which continued to be practised by the architects working in Russia during the period with which we are now concerned

Painting, sculpture, and the industrial arts were also for a long time largely in the hands of foreign immigrants, and to this element St Petersburg owes, for example, such magnificent sculptures as the two equestrian monuments to Peter the Great, one by Rastrelli the elder (1743), and the other, one of the masterpieces of European sculpture, by Etienne Falconet (1776-78), while among foreign painters working in Russia during this period, Giovanni Battista Lampi, Louis Tocque, Alexander Roslin, Jean Baptiste Perronneau, and Madame Vigee-Lebrun are but some of the most celebrated In all these various forms of artistic activity, native Russians began, however, soon to distinguish them-

selves in ever increasing numbers A sculptor like Fedot Shubin (1740 1800), or painters like Dmitri Levitski (1735 1822) and Vladimir Borovikovski (1757-1822), demonstrate strikingly how high the average standard of artistic excellence was in eighteenth century Europe, and how once again, as in the far off days of Gothic art, a style which ultimately issued from a fountain head in France, diffused itself all over Europe, exhibiting, of course, national idiosyncrasies, but yet remaining fundamentally and singularly alike in the different countries The industrial arts—notably as represented by goldsmiths' work, porcelain, textiles, enamels and furniture, and depending more and more upon Russian executants—contributed their generous share towards the complex and attractive picture offered by Russian art life in the second half of the eighteenth century, while at the beginning of the nineteenth, the Empire style, followed shortly afterwards by the "Biedermeier" style, created all over Russia masterpieces of interior decoration possessed of a charm peculiarly their own As material for the furniture used, mahogany now came very much to the fore, being indeed indissolubly linked up with the picture of the life of the Russian aristocracy and higher bourgeoisie during this period

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the predominance of the foreign immigrant artist is definitely broken in Russia, and while the contact with the West becomes closer and closer, and the tendencies of the contemporary art movements abroad continue to be reflected in Russia, there is also much conscious effort to revive the traditions of earlier art, as seen for example in the church buildings, the Ikons and decorative and

colourful peasant art *Fin de siècle* Russia was indeed, in its most civilised representatives, exceptionally keenly interested in art and had a truly encyclopædic knowledge about it The reflection is seen in the blossoming forth of the branch of art which represents one of Russia s most important contribu tions to the world s store of artistic expression— namely the Ballet Of course, the Russian people s native talent for dancing as well as for music is at the bottom of the tremendous development reached by the Ballet in Russia towards the end of the nineteenth century , though as regards the actual technique of this art, it is by no means a plant of purely indigenous growth, but, on the contrary, essentially the outcome of the finest Italian tradition But, when we come to that very important aspect of the art of the Ballet which is represented by the actual staging, the *décor* and the costumes, it becomes particularly evident how much that aspect is conditioned by the previous development of art in Russia The whole of that fascinating world of scenic existence which had been created by the artists, foreign and native, working top speed in Russia during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, had, as it were, got into the blood of the choreographers, producers, and amateurs Not for nothing do, say, the chateaux and parks of Gatshina, Peterhof, and Tsarskoye Selo suggest nothing so much as an entrancingly imaginative and faultlessly tasteful stage setting Hence the extraordinary quality of spontaneousness and clarity of poetical expression in visible terms which stamps the Russian Ballet in its finest form and makes it, truly, the summing up of, and quintessence extracted from, the great artistic past of Russia

AN HISTORICAL SURVEY

By A. Polovtsoff

The year 862 is commonly accepted as the starting point of Russian civilisation. A legendary dynasty of Scandinavian extraction was the first to establish orderly government, mainly in two centres: Kiev in the south and Novgorod in the north. These were the two first nuclei of Russian life, the former trading primarily with Byzantium, the latter with Scandinavia and the Hanseatic cities.

The long road "from Scandinavians to Greeks" mentioned in the old chronicles was the main artery of early Russian culture, focussed on the settlements built along that line. Little has remained of the settlements, however, for the Russian plain is poor in stone, and the usual building material was wood. As a result practically all the Russian towns and villages have been burnt down over and over again, most of the contents usually being destroyed with the buildings. Only reigning princes could afford to build in stone or brick, but their own people were still inexpert in the craft, and the oldest technical words in the language show that the first builders of palatial dwellings were Persians. Expensive textiles and jewels also came from Persia, the names of precious stones being exclusively of Persian origin.

In the tenth century the country was Christianised by St Vladimir, Grand-Duke of Kiev, and the people became enthusiastic converts. Christianity permeated the whole of Russian life to an extent

seldom met with elsewhere Customs, popular sayings, beliefs of every sort, current similes and comparisons, even dates for business transactions—every detail of existence in Russia from those remote days down to the twentieth century, was closely knit with the Orthodox faith Till the close of the seventeenth century, when Peter the Great started a new era, the art of the country was entirely subservient to the Church The Church was the main focus of national life, the racial ideal being merged in the religious during the long ordeal of the Tartar dominance

The first blossoming of autonomous culture was short lived, though it had already won for itself a firm basis in Europe Yaroslav', who reigned in Kiev in the first half of the eleventh century, married his three daughters to the Kings of France, Hungary and Norway, which shows that there was an active intercourse between his country and various European states, though we know little about it This early civilisation came to a catastrophic end in the thirteenth century, however, with the invasion of Zenghis Khan For over two hundred years the country was unable to regain its freedom, and saw all its resources drained by a ruthless conqueror Complete independence was only won as late as the second half of the sixteenth century, when John the Terrible repulsed the last incursion of the Tartar hordes During these long years of slavery Christianity was the symbol and the main spring of resistance to the Mongolian tyrant, and as a result, all the spiritual forces of the country were dedicated to the service of the Church No mediæval Russian painting exists other than that of icons and religious frescoes, while everyday life was so wretched

and so insecure that whatever money could be spent on building was devoted to the construction of churches or convents

Yet, even in those disastrous times the eternal life of beauty knew how to assert itself The very conversion of St Vladimir had been based on an æsthetic ideal Tradition has it that he sent messengers to various countries in order to report to him where the cult of God was celebrated in the finest and most satisfactory way After their long journey had been accomplished the messengers were most enthusiastic over the beauty of the ceremonies they had witnessed at Constantinople, and for that reason the Byzantine or Orthodox rite was adopted in Russia In the tenth century, and more especially later on, the foreign artists who settled in Russia were not long in losing their specific originality Living in Russian surroundings, working with Russian materials, employing Russian workmen and creating beauty for the enjoyment of Russian people, they unconsciously became Russian artists, just as Kneller and Lely became English painters

In every country local art has developed with a certain admixture of extraneous influences The part played by Phœnicians and Egyptians in the budding and ripening of Mediterranean culture has been the subject of many a learned investigation Roman ideals and Roman technique became indigenous wherever Rome had reigned supreme The Moslem civilisation of the Arabs has tinged the whole of Spanish art The discovery of Pompeii in the eighteenth century was of as much importance to London as to Naples In Russia foreign influences have similarly played an important part, especially

at the great turning points of her history, in the tenth century when the Christian faith was borrowed from Byzantium, and in the early eighteenth century, when Peter I forced his country to adopt the ways and methods of Western Europe Those influences were, however, rapidly swamped by the country which had assimilated them, their productions all acquiring a typically Russian flavour of their own

The main feature which distinguishes Russia from other lands is that Russians have always admired things from abroad simply because they were foreign, they took their own art as a matter of course, as something which was not worth worrying about The reforms of Peter the Great rent a deep chasm between the masses, addicted to customs and dress of former days, on the one hand, and a Westernised minority in European clothes on the other These were trained to believe that nothing indigenous was any good, and such an attitude led to an incredible neglect of Russian art treasures

It is to a great extent due to the personal influence of the Emperor Alexander III that a turning point was reached in public opinion The end of the nineteenth and the dawn of the twentieth centuries witnessed a universal revival of interest towards native art in Russia Till then a cultivated Russian, when speaking to foreigners, was wont to deprecate the fact of his belonging to a country but recently initiated to the blessings of civilisation, and foreigners were apt to take him at his word without attempting to judge of the country for themselves Besides, it took several days to reach that country, and once you got there the people spoke an incomprehensible

language, used an enigmatic alphabet, and followed customs unlike those of other lands The French architect, Viollet le Duc, thought he had discovered Russian art, and he published a book about it, without taking the trouble to visit the country or to learn something about it at first hand

Unfortunately the nationalistic revival at the end of the nineteenth century came too late The efforts of a number of students who started exploring the artistic past of the country were unable to cover the whole ground in so short a time Many important monuments had not even been photographed in detail before their final destruction under the present regime Russian art deserves a much more detailed study than up to date literature (even in Russian) can at present supply

Painting, which in the early days was limited to the requirements of the Church, took on a secular character in the eighteenth century For several decades the only development was in the realm of portrait painting, the most important figures being Levitski and Borovikovski Efforts in the way of landscape only appeared late in the century—the chief figure was Simon Shchedrin—and even then only well known gardens and parks were depicted It required the advent of the Romantic era for an interest in unadorned nature to arise Venetsianov, the first to portray peasant life, was the creator of Russian landscape painting, of the conscientious and accurate reproduction of fields and woods, animated by the modest life of toiling humanity A vast succession of brilliant landscape painters of unequal merit went on through the whole of the century multiplying on canvas and paper the aspects of the country in all its parts Ayvazovski, Shishkin,

Kuindji, Klever, Polyonov, Bogolyubov and Levitan are the best known among them

The St Petersburg Academy of Fine Arts, founded by the Empress Elizabeth in 1754, was the first school for Russian art students The best pupils obtained scholarships enabling them to complete their studies abroad, mostly in Paris and Rome, just as in other academies This system produced the same results as elsewhere, and led to the painting of rather dull antique scenes, mythological subjects, and heroic episodes The keen sense of humour of the Russian people was always sceptical about academic art, it never became popular and its output remained limited

The portrayal of actual life began with Venetsianov and the group of men whom he influenced They have left charming scenes of peasant and middle class life, which give a striking insight into the existence of the people Fedotov stands out among them, and plays much the same part in Russian painting as that of Wilkie in Britain Perov, Kramskoy, V Makovski, Yaroshenko and many others carried on the tradition with an ever-increasing love of anecdote, not devoid of didactic tendencies

Alexander Ivanov must be mentioned apart from the other painters of the early Victorian age He died in 1858 after having devoted most of his life to the painting of one immense picture—Christ appearing to the people He was a great artist, who ripened slowly Most of his other pictures are either studies for his one important work, or else sketches done during a long stay in Italy His great picture was bought by the Emperor, Alexander II, and given to the Moscow Museum

The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed in Russia as well as in the West of Europe an interest in historical subjects Visions of old Russian life, clad in the picturesque clothes of former days, led to huge canvases being covered with what the painters thought to be exact reproductions of the past Surikov, C Makovski, Nevrev and Repin became famous for such pictures, though Repin's undoubtedly very great talent mainly exerted itself in portrait painting A little later appeared Vasnetsov and Nesterov, the painters of legendary epic life, as well as Serov, an amazing genius and the greatest portrait painter Russia has ever produced

From 1870 on these painters formed an association called the "peredvijniki" (Wanderers), as their yearly exhibitions travelled from St Petersburg to Moscow and to certain provincial towns Two important buyers purchased most of their best pictures on the opening day These were the Emperor, Alexander III , and Tretyakov, a Moscow millionaire In that way these two men formed the foundation of the Alexander III Museum in St Petersburg and the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow

Towards the end of the century a group of artists, protesting against the political tendencies which some of the Wanderers used their pictures to propagate, formed a new association, "The World of Art," with "Art for Art's sake" as its motto Their first exhibition was held in 1898, and that same year they started a magazine edited by Serge Dyagilev This was one of Dyagilev's first attempts at the sort of work at which he was to be so successful at a later date that of bringing artists together for joint production In 1901 Alexander Benois, with

a group of friends, started another magazine consecrated to the past and called "Russia's Art Treasures," which was succeeded in 1907 by "Staryе Gody" (Former Days), edited by P Weiner This illustrated monthly rapidly acquired a great influence all over the country, and helped to arouse a strong interest in the art of the past and the preservation of ancient monuments among the general public

After the revolution most of the more prominent Russian painters emigrated to foreign countries They are now scattered all over Europe and America, the greater number living in France

Sculpture has never been a popular art in Russia Orthodox Christianity strictly prohibits sculptured images in the churches, and as a result any work of sculpture formerly savoured of idolatry in the eyes of the average Russian The first Russian sculptors of note are those of the late eighteenth century, Shubin, Kozlovski and Martos Before them the only prominent artist to make statues was Rastrelli, the father of the architect, an Italian in the employment of Peter the Great In the course of the nineteenth century a number of gifted men from Pimenov and Antokolski down to Prince Paul Trubetskoy devoted their talents to sculpture without ever succeeding in making that branch of art popular, principally owing to the hostility of the Church

Architecture has always been the most important and the most expressive of the plastic arts in Russia,

and there is a continuous line of work from the splendid cathedrals of the eleventh century, through the exquisite Moscow churches of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the ornate productions of the seventeenth century baroque, the elegant palaces of the eighteenth, the vast and stately public buildings of the early nineteenth in the classical tradition, down to the learned eclecticism of the later nineteenth century

Russian architecture, however much it learnt or borrowed from foreigners, has always been characteristically Russian The great builders of the early Christian period imported wholesale from Byzantium, altered the various elements of their traditional styles, and adapted them to local ideas The Italian artists who settled in Moscow, the new centre of life after Russia had been liberated from the Tartar yoke, have left monuments with nothing Italian about them The cathedrals of the Kremlin form the nucleus of an unique but purely Russian group of sanctuaries, embodying the very soul of the country

After the long period of civil strife and foreign invasion which followed the ill fated reign of Boris Godounov, the general ruin and disorder were such that the first Romanovs had to spend all their energies as well as their money on slow and steady reconstruction In the meantime a new style of building, influenced by the European baroque filtering in through Poland, had grown up in what is now the Ukraine, and with the annexation of these provinces under the Tsar Alexis, a modification of this style became fashionable in Moscow It produced charming, sometimes rather fantastic buildings One of the best, the convent of St Simon,

has recently been pulled down It was so solidly constructed that it had to be blasted with dynamite Fortunately another typical example of the style, the lovely church at Fili, near Moscow, has not yet been destroyed, and it may still be admired by those who visit Russia

Southern influences were not the only ones to mould the art of the country The north of Russia preserved its independence during the Middle Ages and developed an art of its own The wooden churches in those parts are of a highly original architecture, untrammelled in its exuberance, and some of their features, such as the tent-shaped roof, were adopted and reproduced in stone by the Muscovite builders of the seventeenth century With the upheaval of Peter the Great's reforms, foreign architects poured into Russia, but again their work rapidly started to deny their origin The cathedral of St Peter and St Paul in the fortress of that name in St Petersburg was built by Trezzini, but its narrow gilt point of a spire, which for two hundred years fixed the artistic character of Peter's city on the Neva, recalls no Italian model The same is true of Rastrelli's and Quarenghi's churches and palaces, and, in the second half of the century, such men as Bazhenov, Kazakov, Starov, Zakharov, Voronykhin and others adapted the traditions of neo classicism to national life in so solid a way, that their style became a national institution After the Napoleonic wars, when Moscow lay in ashes and had to be rebuilt, a fresh era of prosperity dawned all over the land, and there was plenty of work for the architects The classical style, with its columned porticoes, covered the whole of Russia with a network of stately mansions and office-buildings, which

carried into the nineteenth century the legacy of the eighteenth century tradition for much further and longer than in any other country The personal action of Alexander I played a large part in this, inasmuch as it regarded the capital St Petersburg, though it thereby influenced the provinces also He had the beauty of the city so much at heart that no house could be built there till a sketch of it had been submitted to him for approval, or in his absence to a council of architects appointed by him

The latter half of the nineteenth century saw an awakening of interest for old national forms It led to a new style, whose defects are now more patent than its merits, though it does not lack originality Its chief protagonist was Thon, a former pupil of the St Petersburg Academy Two of his most typical creations, the church of the Annunciation in St Petersburg, and the huge cathedral of the Saviour in Moscow, have been entirely destroyed by the Soviet Government When later a gradual study of the past led to a more thorough revival of earlier art, the mixture of old and new produced some striking monuments The dawn of the twentieth century witnessed a revival of interest in the style of the early nineteenth century, and a number of gifted architects specialised again in neo classic building

Decorative handicrafts have always prospered in Russia, though the places in which they were practised are not always easy to trace In the eighteenth century and in the first half of the nineteenth, many landlords made use of the skill of their serfs to make every kind of material The

produce of such workshops was anonymous, though it often reached to a high degree of perfection Brocades and carpets, tapestries, embroideries in silk, thread of gold and glass beads, china, glass, furniture and so forth, all was made in this way, very often merely for household use or for presents

The rightly called peasant art, the art of a people who could not use the simplest of implements or clothes, such as towels or salt cellars, shirts or spoons, without covering them with embroidery or carving, has a literature of its own It has been studied and collected for a long time Peasant art was especially original in the north, always a very rich country, and produced certain things not known in other parts of Russia, such as the numerous objects made of morse ivory from the White Sea

The silversmiths' and enamellers' work of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reached a high degree of perfection, and was carried on to the end of the nineteenth century, when an artist of powerful imagination and talent, Faberge, made Russian enamellers and stone cutters famous throughout the world

The nineteenth century was also the time of the greatest perfection of Russian music This had always been an ubiquitous art in Russia, but such men as Rimski-Korsakov, Musorgski, Glinka, Borodin, Serov, Chaykovski and many another carried its renown far beyond the limits of the country Only those who have lived in Russia know that music is one of the modes of expression most natural to the Russian people In a Russian village every sort of work is performed to the accompaniment of songs A Russian regiment, however exhausting drill or manœuvres have been,

invariably returns to barracks singing like a trained choir. As for dancing, it is a national art and hardly any village would be unable to produce at least one dancer fit to appear on the stage.

To the general public in England the works of "Russian Art" convey as a rule the memory of a few popular novels by Dostoievski or Tolstoi; of Chalyapin in Musorgski's "Tsar Boris," or perhaps of a ballet such as those which Dyagilev first brought out of Russia. And that is natural, for literature and theatricals are the two forms of art most easily exported. But that would be but a very limited view. A student of any branch of art would find in Russia an amazingly rich field for investigation, and he would meet there the most varied and perhaps the most original expressions of the eternal human craving for beauty to be found anywhere in the world.

THE PERIODS AND SCHOOLS OF EARLY PAINTING

By Paul Muratoff

In a study of the development of early Russian painting, several clearly defined periods may be distinguished, and these periods generally coincide with definite epochs in the history of the Russian State and Church. There must thus be assigned to the first period of Russian painting a definite place corresponding to that early age in her history which is isolated from subsequent epochs by the Mongol invasion of the thirteenth century. Although Russia adopted Christianity from Byzantium in the tenth century, and remained in close touch with Constantinople throughout the two following centuries, the first period can already be distinguished by the general character of its culture, as well as by the existence of such particular cultural centres as Kiev, the Vladimir Suzdal principality, and Novgorod. Local and national characteristics in fact appear clearly from the very first in Russia's earliest architecture. In the sphere of painting, however, a close dependence on the Byzantine world persists till a later date. So close is this dependence that it is impossible to determine whether the eleventh century mosaics of Kiev or the superb twelfth century wall paintings which are still preserved at Vladimir and Pskov were executed by Greek or Russian masters. And even if we assume these masters to be of Russian nationality, they must

nevertheless be regarded as the closest followers of the Byzantine, since they worked in the same style as that which is at the basis of Byzantine painting in the Comnene period (eleventh and twelfth centuries) The same is equally true of the few Russian icons which belong to this early date

The style of these early icons of the eleventh and twelfth centuries is to be distinguished by certain definite characteristics Firstly they show a search for realism and an observation of life which is rarely to be observed in succeeding examples of ancient Russian painting The degree of abstraction is, moreover, less evolved in these icons than in those of a later date Byzantine painting never succumbed so much to decorative and rhythmical principles as did Russian painting after the latter had become independent in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries In the more ancient icons again a broad manner proper to painting predominates over the purely linear, and the earlier works appear somewhat monochrome in comparison with later icons Their colours lack the brilliance which is characteristic of Novgorod icons of the fourteenth fifteenth centuries Here again we have proof of the fact that the early Russian masters, following in the steps of the Byzantine, attempted to achieve pictorial rather than decorative results

As we have already noted, the icons of the early period are extremely rare So far only some ten or twenty exist in Russian treasuries and museums Outside Russia there is no collection of Russian icons which can boast of a single example of this period

The Novgorodian school can be said to have come

into existence at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Icons of this school differ radically from those of Byzantium, as well as from the earlier ones of Russia which belong to an age when national art was still but little more than a variation of the Byzantine. In the Novgorodian icons the decorative quality is more pronounced, whilst the element of realism, so characteristic both of Byzantine and of twelfth century Russian art, almost completely disappears. The national element in Russian painting expressed itself in a leaning towards stylisation, that is to say, in a desire to subject form to the abstract laws of composition and linear rhythm. The Novgorodian icons display in addition a fondness for bright, clear colouring, and in the best period, that is to say, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, these icons are of the finest quality. Their vivid, clear colours give an effect of admirable harmony, never one of gaudiness, yet in comparison with icons of later periods they nevertheless stand out by the predominance of their pictorial quality over the more purely linear treatment which characterises the later ones.

During the fifteenth century the decorative element continues to be evolved in works of the Novogorodian school at the expense of the realist, and they come more and more to differ from the Byzantine. The figures are subjected to a severe convention and to the abstract formulas of rhythm and composition, though in the majority of cases the colours still retain their brilliance. In comparison with the icons of the fourteenth century the figures are more elongated, but it is not until the end of the fifteenth century that one sees in them signs of that emphasised, mannered grace expressed

in exaggeratedly elongated proportions, or of that marked artificiality of movement, recalling the rhythm of a dance In fact the fifteenth century icons of Novgorod always retain a simplicity of style and a monumental character

Pskov occupies a distinct position It was, like Novgorod, another old trading republic, and was in a sense a rival of Novgorod As far as their cultural relationships are concerned, Novgorod and Pskov can be compared to Florence and Siena in the early Renaissance period Pskov was responsible for the creation of a particular and very remarkable architecture, but in the sphere of painting the fifteenth century school of Pskov differs from that of Novgorod mainly in the choice of colours The Pskov masters aimed at a softer harmony than that favoured by the Novgorodians, gentler, pinker shades of red replace in their icons the clear vermilion of Novgorod, and a characteristic fondness for the delicate, pistache shades of green is to be observed

The problems connected with the study of the earliest Muscovite icons, those of the fourteenth century, are still difficult to solve It has thus been suggested that that great master Andrew Rublev, who worked in Moscow and its neighbourhood early in the fifteenth century, was the inheritor of those tendencies which had appeared there in the fourteenth century This supposition is, however, based upon no known fact, and if it is altogether arbitrary on the one hand to regard Rublev as the characteristic representative of a definite Muscovite manner, it is likewise impossible to class him among

the masters of the Novgorodian school. What is most important, however, is that Andrew Rublev was a most remarkable individual. It was the fame which he enjoyed in his lifetime which led many succeeding Muscovite painters to strive to emulate his most marked characteristics; and the fact remains that even if Muscovite painting prior to Rublev did fail to stand out as something distinct, it came to be marked after his death by a greater or lesser assimilation of his manner.

In contrast to the majority of Novgorodian masters, Andrew Rublev favoured light colours and a less deep tone, whilst the faces of his angels already display the method of modelling the form of the faces by means of very delicate and fine shading either in ochre used as a pure colour or with the addition of white. All this is to be seen from a study of his famous icon of *The Holy Trinity*, the only icon which is indisputably by his hand. In this method the ochre has an almost molten appearance; it is a distinctive technique of Russian icon painting, and the name of "plav" (melted) is generally assigned to it. Muscovite painters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries frequently resort to this method, whereas the icons of the Novgorodian school are characterised by faces painted in a more energetic and pictorial manner. The Novgorodians often painted darker faces in a reddish or pinkish tone; masters following in the traditions of Rublev preferred a cleaner yellow "plav." In addition to this trait, the Rublev school is distinguished by the thinly mixed and lightly put on colouring of the garments, and also by the visibility of the drawn outlines of the figures. In Rublev we find a very happy blending of both

the pictorial and the essentially graphic elements After his death it was particularly this feature that the Muscovite school tended to develop, becoming thereby more and more strongly linear in character

In opposition to the icons of the Muscovite school, we find that the earlier character of the Novgorodian traditions is retained even in the sixteenth century Politically and culturally, however it was this century that saw the fall of once mighty Novgorod The trade of this oligarchic republic flourished in the fourteenth and in the first half of the fifteenth centuries Her merchants and ships established relationship with Europe by means of the hanseatic towns, which maintained representatives on the shores of the Volkhov, as well as with distant Constantinople The city increased in wealth, and numerous buildings were erected and new churches decorated In the second half of the fifteenth century, however, Novgorod's economic and political rivalry with the rapidly rising Moscow began The Tsar Ivan III struck Novgorod with a blow from which it was never able fully to recover , its army was smashed and its political independence was surrendered, so that it presented an easy conquest to Ivan IV , who crowned Moscow's victories by laying Novgorod open to devastation and ruin The neighbouring city of Pskov at the same time suffered severely from the wars waged upon her territory between the Muscovite Tsars and Poland

Artistic traditions nevertheless survived the fall of the political and economic power of the two north Russian trading republics [illegible] f the decline of Novgorod and Pskov, and [illegible] the

fact that many rich and distinguished burghers were obliged to leave their homes, the realm of Novgorod remained extensive, stretching on the north east right to the boundaries of Siberia The Novgorodians were Russia's first colonisers That brilliant line of traders, the Stroganovs, who were to a great extent responsible for the uniting of Siberia to Russia, were thus of Novgorodian origin It is thanks to efforts such as theirs that Novgorodian culture became established in the lowlands beyond the Volga, in the north and east of Russia, as well as on actual Novgorodian soil Innumerable churches rose up in the towns and villages throughout these districts, and a number of important monasteries were founded Novgorodian architects built these churches and Novgorodian painters decorated them, so that the tradition was maintained in remote parts of the north and east right down to the end of the sixteenth century, when the Novgorodian capital had already suffered complete collapse It is because of this that many ancient icons belonging to the mid and even to the end, of the seventeenth century still retain Novgorodian character, and are to be classed as icons of late Novgorodian tradition or of the late Novgorodian school

In the second half, even right at the end of the sixteenth century, icons depicting single saints or a group of saints, chosen by the man who had ordered the icon, spread throughout the country These icons were painted in the north and north eastern towns beyond the Volga, and more especially in the numerous monasteries founded in the region Amongst the saints are many who are not of Greek origin, since it was a century in which many Russian hermits and holy men, who had been

famous in preceding centuries, were canonised In many of the icons the traditions of the Novgorodian school are clearly to be seen

Towards the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth we find the stylistic tendencies of Novgorod and Moscow interwoven in an intricate and often fantastic manner in the works of individual painters The stronger and more marked the artistic individuality of a master, the more independent was he in the choice of his style, combining the principles inherited from Byzantium and those surviving from Novgorod with purely decorative, linear and graphic principles whose roots lay in Russian peasant art In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a number of famous artists were at work, but with one exception, we do not know of icons or wall decorations which can be certainly assigned to a definite master who enjoyed considerable fame in his day This exception is Dionysios, who has left in the Theraponte monastery in the north of Russia a cycle of wall paintings, all perfectly preserved and definitely dated to the year 1500 These paintings are one of Russia's finest monuments of the age

Apart from these paintings, which Dionysios executed with the aid of his sons Vladimir and Theodosios, he was also responsible for the decoration of other churches and monasteries, a fact which was often recorded as a very great occurrence by chroniclers of the time Though no icons exist which can be attributed to him on documental grounds, the stylistic peculiarities of his work are so definite and so clearly marked that it is possible,

complete subjection of impressions borrowed from actual life to ornamental and decorative principles.

In Russia the sixteenth century was marked by the development of literary taste, in conformity with the conceptions of the time dependent on the large diffusion of ecclesiastical literature, as well as moral and historical works. Side by side with tracts dealing with problems of Church doctrine there appeared mystical interpretations of various passages of the Holy Writ. A curious narrative literature also developed, as well as a revived taste for the Apocrypha, among the educated people of the time. At times new interpretations were given to these stories of the Apocrypha, and new legends were collected round them.

This curious literary movement could not fail to have an influence on contemporary painting. In the art of this century the illustrative element begins clearly to appear. The icon ceases to be merely the symbolic representation of the other world; it is no longer merely a form of Church decoration and ritual. The sixteenth century painter, following the indications of some person highly versed in ecclesiastical literature, often expressed either a new conception of a traditional theme, or else created a new theme. As a result new subjects, which had never before been met with either in Byzantine or Russian art, appear in sixteenth century icons. Some illustrate the mystical interpretation of the Church's dogmas, or else express the litany of the Church in symbolic images. Others represent parables and legends, and are therefore imbued with a didactic, moral aim.

In icons painted between 1540 and 1570 there is constantly to be observed the complication of former traditional subjects by some new treatment, or by the presence of new subjects with a literary or illustrative reflection. This period coincides with the rule of John the Terrible. It is well known that this grim and fierce monarch was noted for his literary taste, and that he possessed an extensive library which has not yet been unearthed from its hiding place in the Kremlin. In the Moscow of 1550-1560, which was rapidly growing in strength under the terrible Tsar, various influences can be observed. In architecture the original style of the stone "tent-shaped" churches is to be seen. In painting the features characteristic of the Byzantine and the Novgorodian traditions appear wondrously interwoven with the Muscovite trend, with the new literary and illustrative taste, as well as with a stream coming from the West, which brought certain elements of the Renaissance to distant Moscow.

The icons of John the Terrible's day should be included with the icons of the Muscovite school. They mark a period of success in the history of this school. In their colour they differ completely from those of Novgorod. The harmony of tone which so distinguished the Novgorodian work becomes a thing of the past, and the Muscovite school, even in its best period, displays a somewhat restless motley of colours. Vivid patches of vermilion stand out sharply in these sixteenth century icons, which are not counterbalanced by other bright colours; instead these become dull and earthy. Black, a colour which was never used in Novgorodian icons, appears quite often, and, in addition, the

Muscovite icons are often lavishly decorated with gold The drawing loses all the monumental qualities which had been retained throughout the fifteenth century, and in their composition the icons become more complicated Rhythm is lost, and the decorative effect also disappears before the illustrative aim It must nevertheless be said that the icons which belong to the years 1540-1570—to the years preceding John the Terrible's accession or to those of his actual reign—are distinguished by the high quality of workmanship They cannot, of course, be approached with the same standards as the icons of the fifteenth century, yet if they are approached with the demands that were set by the altered taste of their own day in view, many of them may be regarded as important examples of Russian religious painting

The icons of the Stroganov school of the sixteenth and seventeenth century have for long been especially valued by Russian connoisseurs Even in the day when the artistic value of the icon was not properly recognised, there existed in Russia, and particularly amongst the men known as Old Believers, collectors who strove their utmost to obtain Stroganov icons, and who were, according to the values of the nineteenth century, prepared to pay heavily for them Good examples fetched in fact as much as five or even ten thousand roubles apiece (£500-£1000) It is easy to understand exactly what these Russian lovers of the past valued in the Stroganov icons, for the products of the Stroganov workshops were usually carefully finished, and this thoroughness of finish is particularly striking in icons where a full and complicated composition is depicted Such compositions often consist of as

many as twenty figures on a minute panel measuring two, or at times even as little as one inch square

The Stroganov masters were extremely accomplished miniaturists, yet the character of these miniatures is unique Although the figure is decreased to the smallest proportions, it never loses the character of great style On looking at an enlarged photograph of a Stroganov icon, it is easy to mistake it for one of a very large composition, or at any rate for one of an icon of average size (about fourteen by twelve inches) It is perhaps in this that the school s chief merit lies Although these painters worked as miniaturists, and although they paid very particular attention to the thoroughness with which they executed their work, they nevertheless remained artists and never became mere artisan copyists they retained a nobility and simplicity of style, their work never becoming trivial This merit must in the main be attributed to tradition, which linked up the Stroganov paintings with those of the Novgorodian school, even if only with its later productions

The seventeenth century marks the end of ancient Russian painting Signs of a decline were already to be observed in the latter half of the sixteenth century, but its progress in the seventeenth was very rapid At the beginning of the century the majority of icons still retained the elements of real style and often displayed a high standard of execution But by about 1650 little remained of what had once been so distinct in the Russian icon , not only had the original style disappeared, but also the character and even the technical method

A change in taste and in the ideas regarding the role which the painter should play was partly responsible for this seventeenth century decline This change had made itself felt amongst members of the Russian upper classes Icons were now regarded primarily as illustrations to complicated interpretations of ecclesiastical or religio moral literature An understanding of the monumental problems of pictorial art gradually disappeared, and the Byzantine traditions lying at the root of ancient Russian painting gradually came to be forgotten Simultaneously literary and illustrative demands displaced the pictorial principles which connected painting with the instincts of decoration innate in the Russian people At the first this change in taste reacted principally on artists un trained in a definite tradition on craftsmen who had learnt only superficially the means and methods of execution And when the subject came to play *the most important part, the problems of execution* were relegated to a secondary rank It is because of this that in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries icons distinguished by fineness of execution are comparatively rare It was only in a few products of the Stroganov or Court workshops executed to satisfy the demands of a limited and chosen number of distinguished patrons, that technical ability was retained, yet even these workshops were unable to save the art of icon painting from general deterioration to a very low standard

The retention of the high standard of workman ship was made additionally difficult owing to the fact that the influence of new tastes and the increasingly frequent penetration of elements from

the West destroyed the very foundations on which the stylistic principles of Russian icon painting were based Painters who had been trained according to a definite traditional system going right back to Byzantine times were, on the one hand, quite unable to assimilate the entirely different principles of West European painting On the other hand, it was too late for them to relearn their art anew Contact with Western art, generally conveyed in the form of illustrations to printed books and engravings, was unable to teach the Russian artist to acquire a new system of interpretation, although it did lead to a gradual loss of a true and clear understanding of the traditional style At times the importations were copied, but only, of course, with regard to superficial form The underlying significance was never grasped It is not unusual to find in the icons of the seventeenth century a mixture of various elements, in part traditional, in part copied from the West At times the result was curious and not devoid of charm, but in general it expressed itself in a lack of style, and this lack soon became the great fault of the later period of ancient Russian painting, which was to lead the art to complete ruination

Amongst the many surviving Muscovite icons of the first half of the seventeenth century, there are some distinguished by a very careful execution, yet which differ both in drawing, and more still in colour, from the practically contemporary icons of the Stroganov school Their colour is more akin to that typical of Muscovite work than to the Stroganov, but the character of the drawing is different Here no fondness for elongated proportions appears, nor does the desire for noble, simple

to stand apart from this change, and in the churches of the days of Peter, Ann, Elizabeth and Catherine, iconostases of the same Western style as the exteriors of the churches were erected. Ornamentation became wholly Western, and from about the first half of the eighteenth century the Russian baroque style was predominant, while the neo-classical style dates roughly from the second half. The icons in such iconostases as these, as well as those in the eighteenth century churches, often became virtual copies of West European religious pictures, some more or less able, others of frankly hack-work character. The icon, in the sense in which it had existed for so many hundreds of years, almost entirely disappeared from the Russian Church.

There still existed, nevertheless, workshops in which icon painters worked. Whilst the upper classes rapidly acquired new tastes and standards, the process was much slower among the uneducated. Though patrons belonging to the Court set, the aristocracy, the landed gentry or wealthy townsmen no longer turned to masters working in the old manner, but to those who learnt their craft from visiting foreigners or at the newly created Russian Academy of Fine Arts, the case was different among the peasantry in the villages and the middle classes in the provinces. Here, naturally enough, the outlook and tastes of former days was preserved. The Old Believers proved especially conservative. They united a loyalty to the traditional form of church adornment with their faith in an ancient form of Church ritual. They hated the European innovations, and stood for a separate Church; they constituted a sect which refused to recognise the official Orthodox Church ruled by the Synod. At

composition, like that which permeates the work of the Stroganov masters The treatment of the subject is often complicated, and the faces of the figures are not distinguished by that almost white tone they assume in the Stroganov icons The only point of similarity is in fact a fondness in both groups for decorating the icons with gold Here again, however, both the character of this decoration and the colour of the gold are somewhat different These panels are usually assigned to the Court workshop, a fact which points to the high standard of their execution, often as excellent as that of the Stroganov icons It seems well nigh certain that their makers worked for the Muscovite Court, for generous yet exacting patrons

Towards the end of the seventeenth century any ancient Russian painting that retained if only partially the thousand year old Byzantine tradition ceased to exist as an independent art unconnected with Western Europe In the eighteenth century there arose and developed a new school of Russian painting—that of portraiture, genre and landscape, fully in sympathy with the European painting of the day The Europeanisation of Russia so definitely speeded up by Peter the Great was also pursued by his successors, and the whole aspect of Russian life underwent a change The most marked change occurred in Russian architecture The national Russian style of building which in the seventeenth century showed only separate, though numerous, elements of Western styles, gave way completely before the various aspects of Western classicism It was obviously impossible for church decoration

to stand apart from this change, and in the churches of the days of Peter, Ann, Elizabeth and Catherine, iconostases of the same Western style as the exteriors of the churches were erected Ornamentation became wholly Western, and from about the first half of the eighteenth century the Russian baroque style was predominant, while the neo classical style dates roughly from the second half The icons in such iconostases as these, as well as those in the eighteenth century churches, often became virtual copies of West European religious pictures, some more or less able, others of frankly hack work character The icon, in the sense in which it had existed for so many hundreds of years, almost entirely disappeared from the Russian Church

There still existed, nevertheless, workshops in which icon painters worked Whilst the upper classes rapidly acquired new tastes and standards, the process was much slower among the uneducated Though patrons belonging to the Court set, the aristocracy, the landed gentry or wealthy townsmen no longer turned to masters working in the old manner, but to those who learnt their craft from visiting foreigners or at the newly created Russian Academy of Fine Arts, the case was different among the peasantry in the villages and the middle classes in the provinces Here, naturally enough, the outlook and tastes of former days was preserved The Old Believers proved especially conservative They united a loyalty to the traditional form of church adornment with their faith in an ancient form of Church ritual They hated the European innovations, and stood for a separate Church, they constituted a sect which refused to recognise the official Orthodox Church ruled by the Synod At

various periods they were often severely persecuted on this account, and to avoid these persecutions, the Old Believers migrated to the forest region lying beyond the Volga to the steppes stretching along the lower Volga, or to the shores of the White Sea and the Arctic Ocean Many sought religious liberty abroad, and formed centres on Polish territory, on the lower Danube, which was then under Turkish rule, or in Riga, on the shores of the Baltic Sea All these centres boasted workshops in which icons were made by masters who had remained loyal to old traditions

Two such eighteenth century workshops stand out above the rest, the Pomorskaia and the Palecha The village of Palecha lies in the district of Vladimir, not far from the village of Mstera, from which even to day the best cleaners and restorers of old icons come Icons from these two workshops seem to show two different tendencies The Pomorskaia painters were the more conservative, both in their approach and in their technique, and they confined themselves to copying icons of earlier date At times they copied sixteenth or even fifteenth century icons, but generally they appear to have favoured those of the seventeenth century, many of which they had in their possession The standard achieved by these copyists is seldom really high, generally it is little more than the work of conscientious craftsmen

The icons of the Palecha workshop are infinitely more interesting Both in their approach and in their technique these eighteenth century Palecha masters may be counted as distant successors of the Stroganov tradition At times they definitely imitate Stroganov icons, but the usual charm of

the best examples is due to a curious blending of West European motives with traditional elements These new motives were not introduced so sharply as to offend the Old Believers, yet the Palecha painter, working as he himself assumed in the traditional style, unwittingly introduced into his work elements of West European invention in this he is typical and characteristic of his period, and the West European motives serve to prove his sincerity as an artist He remained true to traditional composition and to the traditional characteristics of the figures he depicted, yet in his sincerity he reflected the tastes and ideas of the day to which he himself belonged

This brief survey of the schools and period of ancient Russian art shows that the independent development of this art covered a comparatively short period—some three hundred years During the first three centuries of Christian civilisation in Russia the painters were closely dependent upon the Byzantine world, during the last two centuries influences and breaths from the West penetrated the realm of the icon painter He could neither assimilate nor properly understand these elements, and yet they separated him from truthfulness to the old tradition Thus all that was important and remarkable in the independent work of ancient Russian painting was created during three hundred years, roughly between the dawn of the fourteenth and the first quarter of the seventeenth centuries

Russian painting of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, particularly in the examples afforded by the splendid Novgorodian school, can stand any

comparison with that of the Italian masters working at the end of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, both with regard to the monumental quality of the style and to the unsurpassed and incomparable power of the colours The harmony of the rhythmical compositions, the beauty of the silhouette and line, the concord and delicate tints of the colours , all are of the highest quality, and there is little that can be found in the art of the *world to surpass the works of Andrew Rublev* And if the Muscovite school of the second half of the fifteenth century, as well as in the days of Dionysios and later in the sixteenth century, lost the great monumental style inherited from Byzantium, it did on the other hand attain an unusual fineness of drawing and established an original and strongly national method of execution Even in the period of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century the Stroganov masters proved capable of executing a series of most remarkable miniatures, which in their thoroughness and at the same time in the artistic quality of their work are to be equalled by but very few productions of the class

ART IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

By Alexander Benois

Perhaps no discussion is more futile than that which attempts to determine whether the reforms of Peter the Great in the eighteenth century were *helpful or prejudicial to Russia: it is especially* inapposite when concerned with the narrow field of art, for then it is based on pure surmise, on mere "ifs" and "maybes." Yet at the best of times it is somewhat difficult to avoid such a discussion and it is especially hard to do so to-day, when a belief in nationalism has come to be more generally held than at any previous time, and it is held in spite of the quantity of evidence as to the harm of nationalistic isolation which so frequently confronts us. The utter uselessness, the complete impossibility of any forced or intentional harking back to the so-called primary origins is most clearly to be seen in the sphere of art, for here all encouragement of the national, or of what passes to-day as the national, has so far completely failed to produce a single happy result.

Every "expression of the national spirit" is in fact essentially temporary in character, having regard to a *comparatively short period only. In* the case of Russia this is especially striking, since the country does not present a continuous complex like ancient China or Egypt, where culture evolved through many thousands of years. When we talk of autonomous Russian art we have in mind a period covering at the most some six hundred years

of Glinka, Musorgski, Chaykovski, Borodin and Rimski Korsakov in the other serve to justify such a course Had it not been for the measures of Peter the Great, neither Russian literature nor Russian music could have existed in their present forms, which make of them to day something that is not only known all over the world, but which has also been drawn upon as part of the general European inheritance When the day comes for Western public opinion to be better acquainted with Russian plastic art, the same will apply with equal force to her architecture, her sculpture and her painting

Europe knows very little of Russian art in the last two centuries This is partly due to the fact that comparatively few people have been to Russia and seen her works of art in their true setting, and partly to the fact that very little of all that was written in Russia regarding artistic matters has ever been translated Few foreign books deal with the subject Another obstacle preventing the Westerner from becoming acquainted with that branch of Russian art which shows European influence, is that raised by the nationalist prejudice to which reference has already been made It is a prejudice which demands that all things coming from beyond the Vistula and the Baltic Sea should be "wholly original," not so much in import as in form, though in reality the finest examples of eighteenth and nineteenth century Russian art has none of the gaudiness of the Tartar, the hieratic of the Byzantine, or the piquancy of the exotic It is just this exotic quality that Western critics demand, they expect Russian art to be "barbaric," wild and entertaining, similar in spirit to Cossack or gypsy songs, and to the wild fling of the Polovtzian dances from Borodin's

Igor—which, by the way, does not in the least recall the real music of nomad tribesmen

The exhibition of Russian art in London (1935) does not pretend to present irrefutable proofs of the universal value of Russian eighteenth and nineteenth century art, proofs so undoubted as to elicit an upheaval of public opinion, so serious as to establish the reputation of Russian art according to its true merits Practically all that is worth notice and of outstanding quality is still in its birthplace, in the country where an autocratic sovereign once reigned, and where now rules an equally autocratic doctrine

It is only in the streets and squares of Russia's towns, notwithstanding the destructions of the revolution, that one is able to gather a full idea of what architecture created in the two centuries from Peter's day to our time Monumental examples stand out as landmarks along the road which stretches from the first somewhat shy experiments in "regular architecture" to the unbridled magnificence shown in the edifices of Rastrelli the younger Though born abroad, Rastrelli lived in Russia from the age of sixteen, and became the creator of the brilliant staging in which the life of the Imperial Court flowed from the time of Peter to the very last days of the monarchy, like some uninterrupted apotheosis Those monumental samples of eighteenth century architecture also enable us to trace the evolution of taste towards a greater severity, until the whole of Russia gradually succumbed to the antique and the palladian, and became the land in which some of the world's greatest compositions in the "classic style" were erected It is only when one has admired the

solemn greatness of St Petersburg's architectural landscape, when one has wandered in the parks of her Imperial residences and has visited the manor houses throughout the country, that it becomes possible to realise to what an extent principles, at one time so new, became firmly rooted in the land, or to understand how this classic architecture assumed even national characteristics It is, for example, impossible to think of a Russian manor-house without pediment and columns

As for painting and sculpture, it is only on looking at the treasures preserved in museums that one realises how worthy are the best of Russian eighteenth century portraitists to be deemed equal to the most elegant masters of the West At the same time it is interesting to trace the first experiments in simple realism, for it is here that are to be found those elements which later developed in so interesting a manner in the works of Venetsianov, Fedotov, Perov and the whole realist school of the nineteenth century

Finally, with regard to sculpture, it is only the statues preserved in the museums and cemeteries of Russia and in the monuments which adorn her squares that it is possible to trace the way in which Russian sculpture, which did not come into existence till the end of the seventeenth century, reached to such excellence that it already numbered by the second half of the eighteenth century a whole pleiad of first class masters Two amongst them, Shubin and Kozlovski, can be favourably compared with any Western sculptor

It is in Russia again that the best works of those foreign artists who came to the country as instructors are to be found Some of them settled there

in the capacity of creative artists and taught only indirectly, others were employed as teachers in the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts, founded under the Empress Elizabeth in 1757

Let us now turn to a short survey of the various branches of eighteenth century art

The splendid Sukharev tower of Moscow (1692-1701), recently condemned to destruction, is the last building of importance which is still in the style of the time of Tsar Theodore Alekseyevich, Peter's elder brother, and that of the regency of his sister Sophia Regardless of the Tuscan columns in its small galleries, which recall Italian loggias, its proportions and its whole appearance retained something of the innate grandeur of Russia's older buildings From the very dawn of the eighteenth century, however, following immediately upon Peter's journey abroad (1697-1698), and especially from the very day on which the foundations of his new town on the banks of the Neva were laid (1703), it became evident that the Tsar definitely intended to break with the past, to abandon the peculiarities of local building, and to subject construction throughout the whole empire to the laws which had been adopted by cultivated Europe as the only correct ones These laws were based upon the teaching of Vitruvius, Palladio and Vignola, and since it was impossible on the spur of the moment to find Russians acquainted with these methods, it became necessary both to import foreigners and also to send Russian youths to be educated abroad

The intensity with which the work of building

the new town of St Petersburg was carried on is reflected in a law of 1714 forbidding the erection of stone buildings in any part of the empire, and ordering that all builders and master masons be sent to the new capital Domenico Trezzini, who had been in Peter's service since 1703, and created the famous cathedral of St Peter and St Paul in the fortress (1714-1725), was reinforced by other architects of outstanding merit, such as the great Schlüter, who died, however, almost immediately after his arrival, and J B A Leblond, who came in 1716 This excellent French artist spent only three years in Russia, during which he drew the first plans for the large palace and fountains of Peterhof In addition a number of foreign architects, mostly Germans, worked for Peter and his nobles such were Schlüter's assistant J F Braunstein, G J Mattarnovy (the architect of the Academy of Science, 1718 1725), Th Schwertfeger, and G Schädel Among the Italians the most important was N Michetti (the architect of Monplaisir, 1719-1722) With the one exception of Ivan Zarudni, the builder of the Menshikov tower in Moscow (1705), no Russian names appear on the lists of architects of this period Only after 1725, the year of Peter's death, did Michael Zemtsov (1688-1748), lately returned from abroad, start producing work which stands on a level with that of the Western artists In the reign of Peter's niece Ann, Count B F Rastrelli (1700-1771), undoubtedly an outstanding genius, came to the fore, and throughout the twenty years' rule of Peter's daughter Elizabeth (1741 1761), he was able to realise all the Empress's magnificent architectural schemes Among his achievements was the rebuilding and redecoration

of the palaces of Peterhof and Tsarskoe Selo, at this time considerably enlarged; the creation of the gigantic Smolny monastery in St Petersburg (1748-1751); the erection of the church of St Andrew in Kiev (1747-1767), of the new Winter Palace (1753-1762), and of the Stroganov, Vorontzov, and many other mansions. Russian builders came also to stand at his side; some of these were Rastrelli's assistants or even his pupils, as for instance Sabba Chevakinski (1743-1783), the architect of the cathedral of St Nicholas, Andrew Kvassov, P. A. Trezzini, the Muscovite A. Elashev, Theodore Argunov (a serf of the counts Sheremetev), and finally Prince Dmitri Ukhtomski (1719-1780), the founder of a complete academy of architecture in Moscow.

Peter's buildings are characterised by their comparative simplicity, and recall those which he may have seen when journeying through Holland, France and England. The architecture of Elizabeth was the flowering of exuberant baroque (or rococo) on Russian soil, akin to the type which may be seen in southern Germany and in Italy. A change towards a certain classic severity only occurred after the arrival in Russia of the French architect, Vallin de la Motte (1729-1800). Invited to Russia at the instance of that enlightened art lover, I. Shuvalov, Vallin de la Motte became responsible for the design of one of the loveliest buildings of his time—that of the Academy of Fine Arts (1765-1772). The actual work of building the Academy was entrusted to an excellent Russian architect, A. F. Kokorinov (1726-1777), who was later to become its first director. The evolution towards classicism is still more marked in the work of the

Roman artist, Antonio Rinaldi (*c* 1709-*c* 1790), builder of the first St Isaac Cathedral and of the famous Marble Palace (1768-1772) This tendency received the continued support of the Empress Catherine, who had a veritable passion for building, and who fully deserves her title of the Semiramis of the North Throughout her long rule classicism spread across Russia and practically became, for close on a century, the artistic language of the country The Empress's desires were most successfully executed by the Scotsman, Charles Cameron (1740-1820), architect of the "Cameron Gallery" and of the superb Agate Rooms in Tsarskoe Selo Equally successful was the Bergamese Giacomo Quarenghi (1744-1817), who built a series of markedly palladian edifices for Catherine and her nobles The State Bank, the Hermitage Theatre, and the Alexander Palace are all due to him

It was in the reign of Catherine that Russian architects began to come more to the fore, and they kept well abreast of the foreigners Foremost among them stand the classicist, I E Starov (1748-1808), who built the Tauris Palace, Mikhael Kazakov (1733-1812), who embellished Moscow with superb structures of a distinguished classic style, Voronikhin (1760-1811), whose masterpiece, the Kazan Cathedral, is actually of the nineteenth century, and last, but in no way least, W Bajenov (1737-1799) The Empress thought of entrusting him with the task of transforming the Moscow Kremlin into a classic structure, but fortunately nothing came of so vandalistic a scheme Bajenov had no luck, for three more of this remarkable architect's schemes were likewise fated never to materialise these were the construction of an institute for girls

of noble birth in St Petersburg ; that of a country-seat near Moscow, Tsaritsino, which would have been a curious attempt at a return to "primary origins," and that of the castle of the Archangel Michael, intended as a residence for that crowned lunatic, Paul I. As a matter of fact, the stately castle was actually built (1796-1801), but after Bajenov's death, and then according to the designs of the Italian Brenna (died 1814).

When speaking of eighteenth century architecture in Russia, it is impossible to refrain from mentioning another first-rate artist, Pietro Gonzago, who came to Russia in 1792 and died there in 1831. His architectural phantasies for the stage and for wall decorations deserve to be remembered, alongside with the engravings of his countryman, Piranesi, among some of the most remarkable works of genius ever produced in the realm of fantastic architecture.

It was only towards the very end of his reign that Peter I. was able to reap in painting a worthy harvest from all that he had sown in the Europeanised Russian field. This occurred when two of his scholars, Andrew Matveiev (1701-1739) and Ivan Nikitin (1690-1741) returned from abroad. Unfortunately the activities of both these talented men were cut short when they were still young : they had scarcely had the time to prove—more especially in portraiture—that the lessons which they had received in the Netherlands and in Florence had not been wasted upon them. It was customary both under Peter the Great and his immediate successors—Catherine I., Peter II. and Ann—as

well as at Court and among the nobility, to place important commissions exclusively in the hands of foreign artists Louis Carravaque (died 1755), Ludders, Tannhauer, Pillement the elder, and Giuseppe Valeriani, who came to Russia in 1740 and died there in 1761, are the names of the most favoured as well as of those who produced the best work Valeriani in particular did a great deal to develop those talented Russians whom he found among his pupils at the educational establishment which existed in St Petersburg prior to the foundation of the Academy Two of his pupils deserve special mention they are Mackhaev and, more important still, Levitski, the most remarkable of Russia's eighteenth century painters

Dimitri Grigorievich Levitski was born at Kiev in 1735 and died at St Petersburg in 1822 He was able throughout his long career to paint several remarkable portraits of the Empress, one of which, inspired by a poem of Derzhavin, depicts her in the symbolic form of the Goddess of Justice In addition he has saved from oblivion the features of all those who were most remarkable either at Court or about town The large portraits of A F Kokorinov (1769), of the pupils of Smolny (1775-1778), of the wealthy P A Demidov (1773), and many another are all superb works of art Furthermore his portraits in the Russian Museum at St Petersburg indicate better than any words the extent to which Russian society had imbibed Western culture, at the same time, they display such superb character drawing and such truly remarkable workmanship that none who has seen them can hesitate in giving Levitski a place side by side with the best painters of England and France

Following close upon Levitski comes Rokotov (1730 1808), who learnt much from studying the work of foreigners painting in Russia, such as Count P Rotari, Stefano Torelli, or L Tocque He was, however, able to evolve a personal style for himself which recalls in a way that of Gainsborough V L Borovikovski (1757 1822), another of Levitski's contemporaries with a some what mannered and monotonous style, was never theless a very brilliant man In competition with J B Lampi and with Madame Vigee Lebrun, he enjoyed a great reputation in Russian society at *the end of the eighteenth and in the early nineteenth* centuries In addition to these three masters, Russian portrait painting of the days of Catherine and Paul can boast of a whole series of accomplished artists It will suffice for us to name A Statin, the painter of the quite remarkable portrait of a man in the St Petersburg Museum , Miropolski (1759 1828), Schukin (1758 1828), Drosgin (1745 1805) and Shibanov (1768 1807) The latter was a serf of Prince Potemkin and never received his freedom—not even after he had had the honour of painting the portraits of the Empress herself and of her favourite, the handsome Count Dmitriev Mamonov Shibanov was an unusually gifted personality and his two large and most interesting pictures of peasant life in the Tretiakov Gallery, stand apart in the Russian art of his day A delightful genre picture, *The Young Artist,* by the enigmatic painter, Ivan Firsov, water colours with peasant types by Ermeniev, and several pictures by that indifferent imitator of the Flemish school, Tankov, also deserve mention

Although the new Academy included a course in

and also some of Moscow. The next remarkable master in this style is the above-mentioned Michael Makhaev (1716-1770). He drew and engraved a complete atlas of the new town of St Petersburg, which gives a most advantageous idea of the way in which the city and its neighbourhood had developed during the first half-century of its existence. It is only under Catherine II., and especially at the Court of her heir, Paul Petrovich, that there arose, as an outcome of the new fashion for English parks, a fondness for landscapes of a more natural type. Simon Schedrin (1743-1804) and Michael Ivanov (1778-1823) are the most remarkable of these painters of parks. In addition, Ivanov painted a series of views of the newly conquered Crimea, which display a real feeling for Nature as well as his concern for light effects and his interest in atmospheric shades. The first works of another artist, Theodore Alekseev (1758-1826), who completed his artistic education in Venice and became the real founder of Russia's delightful school of landscape painters, likewise belong to the end of the eighteenth century. F. Matveev (1758-1826) appears as an able imitator of J. Ph. Hackert, whose

" the painting of domestic activities," this style was so greatly scorned that no artist who had been educated in the spirit of the academic doctrine dared to devote his time to work of this nature It is only thanks to foreigners living in Russia and taking an interest in the country s picturesque scenery and costume, that we possess detailed images of Russian life of the period Those who cherish Russia's past should be particularly grateful to men such as J B Leprince (1734 1781), J L Deveilly, Ch G Geissler, the painter of detailed genre illustrations, and, above all, John Atkinson Deveilly came to Russia in 1750 and was responsible for a series of superb drawings done during Catherine II 's visit to Moscow for her coronation John Augustus Atkinson (1775-1831) was a nephew of the famous engraver, J Walker, to whom he owes the reproduction in aquatint of those of his drawings, which he was to publish later under the title of " A Picturesque Representation of the Manners and Customs of the Russians " This work has become a veritable classic in every respect

Russia's first steps in landscape painting can already be discerned in her mediæval art, for in the background of her icons there appear side by side with various pictures of towns and monasteries, highly stylised renderings of woods, rocks, grass, flowers and clouds Under Peter the Great and his immediate successors, landscape remained purely within the realm of topography , thus, for example, the engravers Pierre Picart (died after 1732) and his pupil Alexis Zubov (died after 1741) have left nothing beyond some extremely valuable prints of St Petersburg in the first years of its existence

and also some of Moscow The next remarkable master in this style is the above mentioned Michael Makhaev (1716 1770) He drew and engraved a complete atlas of the new town of St Petersburg, which gives a most advantageous idea of the way in which the city and its neighbourhood had developed during the first half century of its existence It is only under Catherine II, and especially at the Court of her heir, Paul Petrovich, that there arose, as an outcome of the new fashion for English parks, a fondness for landscapes of a more natural type Simon Schedrin (1743 1804) and Michael Ivanov (1778 1823) are the most remarkable of these painters of parks In addition, Ivanov painted a series of views of the newly conquered Crimea, which display a real feeling for Nature as well as his concern for light effects and his interest in atmospheric shades The first works of another artist, Theodore Alekseev (1758-1826), who completed his artistic education in Venice and became the real founder of Russia's delightful school of landscape painters, likewise belong to the end of the eighteenth century F Matveev (1758 1826) appears as an able imitator of J Ph Hackert, whose fame was so universal at this time Apart from Leprince, Deveilly and Atkinson, who all painted a number of views and to whom reference has already been made, the foreigners numbered among them several men who devoted themselves to painting characteristic views of both capitals The most interesting of these pictures are by Delabarthe, Damame Demartrai, Tory Mayer and Paterson, they are all animated by attractive figures of different types of people

However small the success which genre and

landscape painting achieved in Russia in the eighteenth century, this success must ever rank as greater than that which was to be earned by religious and historical pictures, and it is only for the sake of completeness that a number of painters of this type will be mentioned here The younger of these men received their education at the new Academy of ' free art," where such competent teachers were to be found as both the Lagrenee, Le Lorrain and Doyen, the latter a world renowned painter in his day Puchinov, Lossenko, Koslov, P I Sokolov, Akimov, Andrew Ivanov and Ugrumov are worthy representatives of an art which was intended for the decoration of churches and of State apartments Though complying with the requirements of the " grand style " and ruled by canons produced by the study of the antique, this art lacked vitality and appears but as an academic exercise, carried out on a very large scale Still, the very fact that Russian art of the end of the century could show a whole group of men who had so thoroughly mastered their profession is a proof that the conditions necessary for the future appearance of a real Russian school already existed, and that the road was prepared for the coming of such temperamental and infinitely brighter artists as Kiprensky, Brullov, Brunı and Alexander Ivanov

In its general outline, Russian *sculpture* in the eighteenth century follows in the steps of painting Up to the middle of the century foreigners had to be applied to , two of these require mention, the Frenchman, N Pineau (1684 1754), and the Italian,

Count Rastrelli the elder, who came to Russia in 1715 and died in 1744 He made an equestrian statue of Peter I and a remarkable group of Anna Ioannovna with her black page Even at a later date, when Catherine II decided to erect a worthy monument to Peter the Great, she did not venture to entrust the work to a Russian artist nor to that excellent French sculptor, N Gillet (1709-1791), who was attached to the St Petersburg Academy, but decided to send for Etienne Falconet Thus the latter came to create his world renowned masterpiece which still graces the banks of the Neva By the end of the century, however, Russian sculpture was already able to boast of several Russians of a definitely European standard In portraiture, for instance, Shubin is a veritable rival of Falconet and Houdon

Fedot Shubin was an entirely self-made man Born in 1740 in the depth of the province of Archangel, where the local industry consisted in the carving of morse-ivory, he managed by 1761 to become a pupil of Gillet at the Academy of Fine Arts He stayed there till 1765, when a scholarship took him abroad After spending several years in Paris, Italy and England, where the work of Nollekens greatly impressed him, Shubin returned to his own country to enjoy the patronage of the Empress and of the mighty Potemkin Even so he was destined to die (1800) destitute, having lost all his possessions in a fire Shubin produced numerous busts and statues, all of which are remarkable for the vividness of their character drawing as well as for their extraordinary technical mastery

Among his contemporaries, Michael Kozlovski (1753 - 1802), D Rachette, Theodore Schedrin,

Gardeev, I Prokofiev and Martos (1752-1835) are all outstanding in the field of plastic, decorative and idealistic art Masterpieces such as the graceful Cupid and the somewhat theatrical monument to Suvorov (1800) by Kozlovski, as well as the monument to Prince D M Galitzin by Gardeev, and a series of tombstone sculptures by Martos cannot be considered as anything but remarkably striking, when it is remembered that less than a century earlier there existed in Russia no form of plastic art whatever In non-Westernised Russia all sculpture was regarded as idolatrous, and but for some tentative efforts made in remote parts of the country, that branch of art was never practised before the days of Peter the Great

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY PAINTING

By Serge Ernst

The first half of the nineteenth century, which was a time of great political vicissitude in Western Europe, was in Russia a period characterised by the development and gradual assertion of the spiritual life of the country It was a period in which the genius of the Russian people found expression in every branch of art, and in each of them development was both many sided and deep The whole of the eighteenth century in Russia had been a turmoil, an age of hurry to establish a new order both of life and its surroundings Russia had been, throughout that period, shrouded in the mists of magnificent planning and in a perpetual rush, which allowed no time for personal spiritual development But with the dawn of the nineteenth century a new period of Russian history began, which was to produce the most magnificent results And with the dawn of this period there coincided the accession to the throne of the young Tsar Alexander I, grandson and pupil of Catherine the Great, one of the most enlightened and wisest women of her time Thus a fierce and changeable spring was succeeded by a flowering summer, full of a new strength and vigour

All the most important spiritual treasures of the new, Westernised Russia were produced at this date To it belongs that enchanting, remarkable

genius Pushkin, to it belong such poets as Zhukovski, Baratynski, Tyutchev and Lermontov, whose influence has affected Russian poetry ever since, to it belong again such writers as Gogol, Turgenev, and Tolstoi, such dramatists as Griboedov, and the musicians Glinka and Dargomyzhski, the creators of Russian opera—and this is to mention but a few of the names which are to be associated with this remarkable period of Russian culture

In the realm of the plastic arts the age is no less important Whilst the eighteenth century, notwithstanding the greatness of the individual masters it produced, was on the whole a period of experiment, the early nineteenth century stands out in the history of Russian painting as the period in which an individual and national style was evolved Yet though this individual style of painting was created by a number of different artists, it is nevertheless clear that the basic idea of the revival was due to a general return to nature, to a deep call from within, and to a glowing delight in the beauties of the world Reacting against the conventionality and the grandeur of the eighteenth century, the artists now sought for simplicity and sincerity of feeling, colour and style

Three early nineteenth century painters, Alekseı Venetsianov (1780 1847), Silvester Schedrin (1791-1830) and Alexander Ivanov (1806 1858) expressed the preponderant attitude of Russian painting with particular strength and perfection Venetsianov was a man of great modesty, kindness and nobility of character He was the first to depict Russian life and character in all its freshness and innate simplicity, and the same is true of his landscapes

Italy, the sunny magnificence which forms and creates so much in painting Schedrin s favourite subjects were the coast of Sorrento, the ivy covered terraces of Italy, the shady walks round Albano and Nemi, the old, greyish golden Rome, or the romantic Neapolitan nights, illuminated by bonfires at Santa Lucia He was constantly preoccupied with the radiant sky, the dark sapphire of the sea, the movement of the breeze on distant waters, the glorious, rich light of the Italian noon Many critics find great similarity between Schedrin's Italian canvases and those of Corot Both artists lived in Italy at the same time , they were inspired by one and the same landscape , their theories on painting were closely related It is very unlikely that they ever met, yet there is some truth in the adage that ideas are carried on the air We learn from Schedrin's letters that he worked at times for various English patrons either residing or travelling in Italy, and it would be most interesting if some of these canvases of his could be retraced

Alexander Ivanov, the third great painter of the period, was another of these Russian Italians He lived for many years in Italy, spending most of his time on his large picture *Christ s Appearance before the People* This represents the synthesis of all the dismays and the delights of his deeply religious soul He did many sketches and numerous studies of figures and landscapes for this picture, and all of them are remarkable for their profundity as well as for the freedom and depth of his painting It is these sketches and studies which constitute the greater part of his surviving work, and he appears in them as a man in advance of his day—he seems even to rise to those heights of genius where laws

of time and space become irrelevant. Ivanov's figure studies are particularly valuable on account of his unusually bitter and subtle understanding of the human face, in which he was fully able to express a man's inner life. His landscapes are rendered beautiful by his deep, lyrical feeling and by the daring and sureness of his colour scheme. The secrets of composition lay open to him. His sketches on themes of the Old and the New Testaments belong in their intensity to the very highest of all that Russian religious painting ever created. Had they been executed upon the walls of a church, as Ivanov intended, Russian art would have become the possessor of an unequalled monument, perhaps unsurpassed but for the finest of Italian frescoes.

Italian landscape and Italian art had in general a great influence on Russian painting in the early nineteenth century. This was largely due to the fact that many young Russian painters of the day went to Italy to complete their artistic education. The St Petersburg Academy of Fine Arts and the Society for the Encouragement of Artists sent their students there for a period of several years, during which they had ample opportunity of working quietly either at Rome or in Naples, amidst lovely scenery, and surrounded by famous monuments. It is impossible fully to estimate the value of this Italian influence, for at that time Italy was the only international art centre that existed, and thither artists flocked from every part of the world.

O. Kiprenski (1783-1836) and K. Brullov (1799-1852), the two leading portrait painters of the early nineteenth century, also spent many years in Italy. Kiprenski went there as a fully formed artist,

comparatively late in life His real masters were the great Flemish painters of the seventeenth century, and he also owed a considerable debt to the English portrait painters of the eighteenth century His thick effective painting in a romantic vein was fully in accordance with the tastes and temper of the day In his half length drawings, however, which are sensitive and elegant, he at times recalls Ingres

Brullov, on the other hand, owed his complete artistic development to Italy It may even be said that he grew up beneath the Italian sky His was a nervous and enthusiastic temperament In his large academic pictures such as *The Last Days of Pompeii* and *The Attack on Pskov*, he appears as superficial and futile, in his nature studies and portraits his work is full of life, wit and glamour, and he appears as a real artist Portrait galleries containing works of Kiprenski and Brullov are lucky in possessing monuments representative of a great period of Russian life and art

Portraiture filled a very important place in Russian art of this period and there are a very considerable number and variety of portrait painters Masters such as V Tropinin (1776 1857), A Varnek (1782 1843) or S Zarianko (1818 1870) all left an important heritage, for they were diligent and observant chroniclers of their day, who also succeeded in remaining interesting artists They were surrounded by a number of followers and pupils, some of whom possessed definite individuality Such were, for example, J Jacovlev (1787 1843), P Orlov (1812 1863) and P Zakharov (1816 1852) Several water colourists, with P F Sokolov (1791 1847) at their head, form a distinct

and separate group among the portrait painters of the day.

In the years 1820-1830 the culminating point in the development of Russian art of the first half of the nineteenth century was reached. There already existed at this date a multitude of landscape painters who were to play a large part in the subsequent development of Russian landscape. The most important are M. Vorob'yov (1787-1855), G. Chernetsov (1801-1865), N. Chernetsov (1804-1879), M. Lebedev (1811-1837) and V. Sternberg (1818-1845). I. Ayvazovski (1817-1900) too began working at about this time, and his early canvases show him to have been a follower of the typical Russian landscape painters of the eighteen-thirties.

Contemporary events also inspired a whole number of Russian artists in other ways. Apart from Venetsianov and his school, the artists N. Alekseev-Syromyanski (1813-1880), P. Fedotov (1815-1852), A. Chernyshev (1826-1863) and A. Volkov (1827-1873) among others, worked in the same genre vein. They followed to some extent the Dutch masters of the seventeenth century and their work is characterised by a very thorough, delicate technique. They really possessed the secret of depicting the life which surrounded them in a vital and artistic manner. The greatest among them was Fedotov, a painter with a sad, embittered, often even, an angry mind. He is noted for his satirical paintings such as *The Morning of a Civil Servant who has received his First Medal* or *The Major's Wooing*. But perhaps his finest works are his small portraits in oils. These are surprisingly sensitive, and nobly restrained, both in their temper and in their severe yet simple style.

At that time the St Petersburg Academy of Fine Arts directed all official artistic affairs, and it had a considerable influence on the general trend and development of art in Russia It numbered such skilled academicians as A Egorov (1776-1851), V Shebuev (1777 1855), P Bassin (1793 1877) and F Bruni (1799 1875) The Academy also organised large exhibitions in which were shown examples of the whole of Russian painting there existed then no art societies and Russian artists had not as yet organised private exhibitions of their own Art periodicals, however, began to appear for the first time "The Journal of Fine Arts" was edited by V I Grigorovich, secretary of the Academy of Fine Arts, in 1823-1825, and "The Fine Arts Gazette," edited by the publisher N V. Kukol'nik, began after 1830

It was at this time, too, that the first collectors who were interested primarily in Russian art came to the fore , up to this time no collector would ever have thought of specialising in works of the Russian school Notable among these were A R Tomiloff, whose collection was lovingly preserved by his grandson E G Schwartz, until it was scattered in the years 1917-1918, and P P Svin'in, the editor of "Notes of the Fatherland," who got together a veritable gallery of Russian art which was sold in 1839 Numerous pictures from this collection are now the prize pieces of many a Russian museum Svin'in devoted much space in his journal to a discussion of art questions, and at times even conducted a campaign in its columns in favour of Russian artists

In 1821 a group of art lovers headed by Prince I. A Gagarin, P A Kikin, A I Dimitriev-

Mamonov, L I Kil and F I Shubert formed "The Society for the Encouragement of Artists," which did a great deal in the first half of the nineteenth century in developing Russian art This was in fact an age of artistic enthusiasm, when art was genuinely loved, and when it played a definite and essential part in life Even people destined for other professions found themselves enthusiastic supporters of art, and in many cases men who had begun by being amateurs ended by leaving their mark on the artistic history of the country Such was the case of P Fedotov, whom we have already mentioned, he began his artistic career as an officer in the Guards Count Th Tolstoy (1783-1873) was similarly placed, for he started as a midshipman in the Baltic Fleet in 1802 Throughout his long life he produced a great variety of works pictures, sculptures, medals, illustrations and stage scenery All of them show great mastery and attest to the high quality of the art of the first part of the nineteenth century Such again was Prince G G Gagarin (1810 1893), son of the Russian ambassador in Rome, himself at first a diplomat He was an alert and witty artist, and a remarkable master of drawing

In the provinces, too, in the very depth of the country, and in every part of Russia, small artistic workshops were formed, and to these belonged local painters who were mainly occupied in decorating churches, painting portraits or teaching painting The art school at Arzamas in the province of Nijni-Novgorod, founded by A V Stoopin (1776-1861), became the most famous of these Several prominent Russian artists of the second half of the century, such as J N Kramskoi and

I E Repin, worked in their youth in similar provincial workshops

To day, now that it is possible to look back to this period in calm, unbiased perspective, the first half of the nineteenth century strikes us not only as one of the happiest, but also as one of the most delightful in the whole history of Westernised Russian art It was possessed of that valuable completeness of perception of the world which is to be found in all great movements in art Painting was, moreover, a single entity, which knew nothing as yet of discord , which still remained free from the squabbles born from the diverging of various schools of thought The painting of the period possessed all the energy and fullness of youth , it had a faith in the future, combined with a happy realisation of the present , it was something clear and intelligible to all This period of Russian art reached its historic and logical conclusion in the eighteen fifties, when the whole culture and life of the country underwent a complete change With the altered times a new era dawned also in the art of Russia

DECORATIVE ART

By Tamara Talbot Rice

The ballet and the theatre first came to be enjoyed thoroughly in Russia at the court of Peter the Great, and almost from the start dancing was regarded as the most exquisite of entertainments. In a short time it also became the most favoured, and ever since that day Russia has produced some of the finest dancers that the world has known, as well as some of the best of audiences. Yet, in spite of the virtuosity of the dancers and of the critical standards of the public, which helped to maintain the dancing at a level that only the most talented could reach, decades passed before a painter of merit came to transform the ballet into something more than the most delightful of entertainments. But for two art lovers—Mamontov and Dyagilev—the Russian ballet and theatre might well have remained mere theatrical forms, as far removed from Fine Art as a circus performance is from that superb canvas by Seurat, *The Circus*. Had it not been for these men the ballet and theatre might have developed in Russia as they did in the rest of Europe, having no other aim than of delighting children and of entertaining adults. In Europe it was only at times that they succeeded in inspiring a Degas or a Dumas to create in memory of them what they never actually strove to attain in themselves, and to express that at which they did no more than hint. Such a result was due to some happy chance, rather than to artistic forethought.

Mamontov and Dyagilev, however, had greater faith in the stage than the stage had as yet learnt to have in itself, and the innovations that they introduced transformed it into something which could make a real challenge to the painter Since their reforms every performance of the Russian ballet, the Opera and of the Moscow Art Theatre, has stood out as a superb artistic achievement as well as a perfect entertainment, for with each new production there has been associated scenery of the first artistic quality, and it is this scenery which has been responsible for the creation in Russia of a decorative art which can now unhesitatingly be classed as a Fine Art

The value of decorative art, using the term with reference to the theatre, will only appear in all its true proportions after a rapid glance has been cast back to the art of the early nineteenth century in general, and more particularly to that of the ballet In the earlier part of the century, eighteenth century conventions still ruled the ballet The dancers still followed along the lines prescribed by Beauchamps, ballet master at Louis XIVth's Academy of Dancing, and although first Camargo's reforms and then the nudist tendencies of the French revolution had led to the lightening and shortening of dancers' dress, and the vanity of M Gardel had led to the abolition of the mask, all else had remained unchanged The new spirit which Vigano (1769-1821) had introduced to the Scala at Milan had been of a purely temporary character The fine scenery which Sanquirico had designed for him, and the new interpretation for which Vigano had been responsible, had failed to do more than attract a passing interest before they fell into

complete oblivion with the death of their progressive and talented creator

The place of such innovations on the stage was usurped by the romantic spirit, which had already penetrated literature and art, and it was the ballet that provided the movement with two of its most devout handmaidens—Elssler and Taglioni Taglioni in particular was able to express all the aspirations of romanticism "It was as if she danced that which Kant thought, which Novalis sang, which Hoffman had imagined," writes Levinson In fact, so completely did the ballet-blanc of the eighteen-thirties succeed in expressing the spirit of the age, so thoroughly did it bury the aspirations and achievements of Vigano and Sanquirico beneath the billowing, virginal folds of its tutu, that for long the public failed to realise how lifeless the tradition had actually become, how unimportant the *corps de ballet*, and how purely incidental the music, scenery and plot All eyes were fixed on the prima ballerina, round whom the ballet was made to revolve, and so satisfying, each in her own way, were the prima ballerinas of the nineteenth century—the Elssler, Taglioni, Grisi, Cherito, Grahn and Andreyanova—that none realised how moribund was the art of the ballet Yet in actual fact its inner life was at a standstill it was as if a mould had been created from which mere casts were being drawn instead of original statues—casts which only assumed merit when the prima ballerina endued them with life

The theatre had evolved upon similar lines, and such was its dullness that in 1870, when a new theory of production was launched from Meiningen, many a producer welcomed it with delight Though

this theory was wholly unimaginative, it had the merit of being novel and up to date, and these characteristics enabled it to stretch its tentacles across the European stage, regardless of those who cried out against it The Meininger advocated naturalism and archæological exactitude upon the stage, and so fell in with the demands of public taste Still more important to their success however, was the fact that they were the first to consider the possibilities of spot lighting by means of the lime light, and it was they who first rebelled against existing illusionistic scenery, painted in perspective and then flat lit, maintaining instead that concentrated lighting, such as the lime or arc light made possible, would introduce chiaroscuro and so reveal the *trompe l'œil*

The Meininger theories were adopted throughout Europe Yet at times disagreement was voiced thus an English critic writing in "The Theatre" of 1881 exclaims, "The Meininger strip heaven of its stars and leave a blank void of night—they do many things well, but they do not do well those things that require to be done better than well" In France the symbolists, headed by Paul Fort, Mallarme and Verlaine, felt in much the same way, and affirmed, in the words of Komisarjevsky, that "a backcloth and a few draperies were quite sufficient to incite the imagination, and that naturalism could lead but to a dead end"

In Russia the effect of the Meininger theory was twofold under the leadership of Nemirovich-Danchenko and of Stanislavski—both enthusiastic supporters of that naturalism which [illegible] as the result of the deepest study—acti[illegible]loped marvellously Scenery, however, [illegible], it

even succeeded in becoming duller than it had been in the earlier part of the century Though this decline of scenery was universal throughout the country, it was less marked in the ballet than the theatre, for the ballet was then under the control of Marius Petipa He combined all the qualities of an excellent dancer with those of a sensitive and artistic producer Backed by the support and additional knowledge and taste of Vsevolozhski, at that time director of the Imperial Ballet at St Petersburg, Petipa's productions stand out as some of the finest that the late nineteenth century knew Though classical in every way, his ballets bore the mark of true inspiration, and it is due to this quality that the Russian ballet was able to regain that vitality which Paris and Milan had lost—the vitality which was to make the glorious revival of the early twentieth century possible

Notwithstanding all the talent which was to be found in nineteenth century Russia, however, the stage of that day was unable to produce a veritable work of art, and the fact that it has since been able to do so is primarily due to Mamontov, a sensitive and generous patron So great was his devotion to the theatre, that he spent his entire fortune in transforming it, and died poor Prompted perhaps by the experiments of Lugne Poe at the Theatre d Art in Paris, he was one of the first persons in Europe to rebel against the effect of the Meiningen naturalistic theories, and the first man to combat their influences by turning to real artists for the scenery required for the operas and plays he was to produce in his private theatre in Moscow Vroubl, Vaznetzov, Korovin and Golovin—the foremost painters of his day—were those whom he selected

By encouraging them to design the costumes as well as the settings of the operas, to avoid the *trompe-l'œil*, to introduce firm and vigorous colours as the basis of scenic design, and to use new and expressive shades in order to attract the public, he was able to direct Russian scenery and design to that glorious road along which Dyagilev was so triumphantly to conduct them, and which was afterwards to be followed by the whole of Europe

The men selected by Mamontov shared an outlook which differed radically from that of the earlier nineteenth century. Most of the older artists were ardent sympathisers with, if not actual members of, the Wanderers' group (Peredvijniki), and held that the political and social results to be brought about by a work of art was actually of greater importance than the æsthetic value of the work itself. The newer men were unable to conform to this theory, since it was one which could only lead to dearth in art. Instead "art for art's sake" became their cry. It was inevitable that this should be the demand of men who had become familiar with the works of the great French impressionists, and it was likewise natural that they should insist upon enjoying liberty of inspiration and integrity of craftsmanship, insisting upon choosing subjects and methods freely, unhampered by the dictates both of those who favoured Westernisation and of those in favour of a revival of the old Slavonic elements in Russia itself.

They coupled a romantic, impressionistic technique with so marked a talent that—regardless of the more retrograde public—their very first experiments in theatrical art assured instant success for Mamontov's venture. Vroubl in particular created so opalescent a vision in his settings both of *The Swan Princess*, inspired by the story of Tsar Saltan, and of *The Queen of the Sea*, based upon Sadko, that he provided Russian art with something very similar in feeling to the pictures of Monet. His effect was considerable, and the younger men who had already shared his outlook now became still more insistent in their demands. The ablest and keenest of them were the two painters Leon Bakst and Alexander Benois, and their friend Serge de Dyagilev, though a layman, was equally enthusiastic. His fine critical faculty, his sure taste, and his ardent sympathy with the movement led him to assume the editorship of a periodical entitled "The World of Art" (Mir Iskusstva), which is now a bibliographical rarity. The theories of the younger school found expression in its pages, and their works were reproduced in it. It was in this way that they became known to a far larger public. Still more important was the support which the publication afforded by its very existence, by its actual presence and its regular appearance. This alone served to encourage these young artists throughout a difficult period, strengthening their faith in their theories, and thus helping them to weather the storm.

Success came to them early in the century, but at first this success was somewhat hesitant. Though the Meininger theories had died on the Mamontov stage, the Board of Imperial Theatres was never

destined wholly to adopt the new tendencies Telyakovski, at this time the director of the Great Theatre in Moscow, was won over by the success of Vasnetzov's settings of Ostrovski's *Snow Queen* for Mamontov, and he gave Korovin the commission for the scenery of *Pskovityana* and his friend Golovin for *The Ice House* In St Petersburg first Volkonski, then Telyakovski again, turned to painters such as Korovin, Golovin, Bakst, Benois and Anisfeld, for their scenery, but their orders were only intermittent Thus Bakst's first work for the St Petersburg Imperial Theatres was the scenery for *Oedipus* produced in 1904 His settings of *Hippolytus* appeared in the same year, though his first ballet, *Sylvia,* was only staged in 1907 Recognition came to Benois somewhat earlier, for in 1902 the Imperial Ballet of St Petersburg staged his *Crepuscule des Dieux,* which was followed five years later by *Le Pavillon D'Armide* Korovin's *Russlan and Ludmilla* and Golovin's *The Magic Looking Glass* were also produced at much the same date—and this summarises almost the whole extent of the government's support

It was Dyaglev who was destined to give the young artists their full and complete opportunity and to lead them to fame—this time to European fame He assumed the role of patron, almost of creator, of modern decorative art, commissioning the leading artists of his day to produce scenery such as no other producer would ever have dreamed of Thus Bakst, Benois, Roerich, Larionov, Goncharova, Sudeykin, Dobuzhinski and Seit among the Russians, Picasso, Derain, Matisse, Braque, Marie Laurencin, Pruna and Chirico among foreigners, were all drawn to the theatre to

produce veritable masterpieces as settings for Dyagilev's ballets

It is usual to day for people to assume that the creation of decorative art depended entirely upon a new and startling use of colour, yet this is only true in a very restricted sense The new and vivid use of colour evolved by the artists was not at the basis of the movement it was actually only a secondary consideration, since the designers regarded line as of the utmost importance Such was their knowledge of colour, however, that they were able to make full use of it without forgetting either the value of line or their highly specialised theories of production

Vroubl had been one of the first to stress the importance of colour, believing that the stage should be treated as a living, not as a fictitious thing Bakst went still further, maintaining that the stage should present so fascinating an aspect as instantly to transport the spectator from the everyday world to that of the imagination He considered that every detail of the scenery should be so carefully studied and so completely in the spirit of the age in which the play was set, so devoid of anachronisms, yet so different from daily life, that the stage would seem real as well as living, habitable as well as unattainable Minor artists who had sensed this theory attempted to achieve Bakst's results by intensive stylisation Yet the initiators of the movement, Bakst Benois or Larionov, always avoided falling into this extreme Instead, as for example in Larionov's *Children's Tales*, they used colour as a symbol Often it was a subdued yet equally

significant symbol, as in the case of Benois But by selecting the characteristic shade, intensifying it as is always necessary in the theatre, and then using it impressionistically, they achieved truly magnificent results

Golovin and Korovin were both great artists and splendid innovators, but they were not such masterly designers as their immediate successors and contemporaries The former's *Oiseau de Feu* and the latter s *Festin* have faults, which for all their beauty, Bakst was quick to notice The scenery of both is too impressionistic, and the pictorial qualities trespass upon the stage and detract from the scenic effect Bakst soon came to realise that perfect scenery is that which, whilst retaining the full value of a fine picture, neither usurps the stage nor allows the stage to detract from its own value Some of his followers, such as Larionov, have gone still further, coming to believe that scenery should form but an outline on which the dancers and actors themselves fill in the detail Bakst's formula, however, seems to provide for surer results, and appears all the more convincing when we see it applied by this remarkable painter in scenery of such sure beauty and such bewitching colours that past and future alike lie forgotten, and the glorious present alone seems to count

His friend, colleague and contemporary, Alexander Benois, scarcely cedes to Bakst in his understanding of the theatre, his powers of creation or his sensitive taste, and his canvases stand among the best of the age, an equal delight to the theatre-goer and to the picture collector Here no bright colours come to dissemble the loveliness of his line, no startling features are included to create an

unexpected effect Rather the palette of a Turner and the quality of a Boucher combine to add irresistible attraction to work of remarkably pure and sober form His finest stage works, *Petrushka* or *Pavillon d'Armide* to name but two, are for the most part set in the eighteenth century—the artist's favourite epoch—and such is his sense of period that these reconstructions are not only delightful in themselves, but also add to our knowledge of that age They ring so true, so spontaneous is their spirit, so correct their atmosphere, that it is hard to believe that they are not by the hand of some contemporary of Watteau They have none of the somewhat reconstructive spirit which is to be felt at times in the pictures of the eighteenth century by that excellent painter Somov, or in the alluring scenery by Sert Dobuzhinski alone shares Benois' almost uncanny knack of reliving rather than of recreating the past, and his exquisite scenery for the Moscow Art Theatre production of *A Month in the Country* is not only artistically perfect, but the very epitome of the age it depicts

Roerich was another member of this unusually gifted group of artists Though essentially a painter of first-rate standing, he was also able to produce perfect scenery and to introduce a new range of colours to the theatre Like Benois and Dobuzhinski, a lover of the past, his preference was for a remoter past, and it was to the more distant date of the nomadic age that he turned, relying on his knowledge of Hither Asia for the colours which he used with such superb effect in his setting of the *Polovtzian Dances from Prince Igor*

Goncharova's exquisite decorative art, of which such good examples are provided by ballets as

different as the vivid *Coq d'Or* and the austere *Noces*, finds inspiration in mediæval Russia In fact her essentially modern and vital art is almost a return to the Byzantine, and certainly serves as a link with that traditional Russian art which still finds expression, in one form or another, in the works of Sudeykin, Kustodiev, and above all of Bilibin and Steletski

Space forbids a more detailed discussion of these artists or even the mere mention of those numerous painters whose work deserves to be placed in the very forefront of contemporary art Yet before concluding this chapter, reference, however scanty, must be made to a group of artists who, though not craftsmen, nevertheless deserve to rank side by side with the painters, sculptors and designers These are the choreographers, the producers and creators of ballet Dancing, which is their medium of expression, enables them to produce effects such as the theatre can never hope to create Yet, had the new artistic ideals of the late nineteenth century failed to inspire them, the Russian ballet, for all its fine scenery, would have remained as inert as has that of Paris That brilliant choreographer Fokine was there to respond to the new spirit, to unify, co ordinate and to encourage, and more important still, to create the finest of designs, the most delicate of outlines, the most beautiful of pictures by an inspired disposition of his dancers His *Sylphides* must ever rank amongst the real works of art of its time, and when seen with Benois' original scenery, it appears as one of the most moving In more recent times the public at Colonel de Basil s Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo has been privileged to witness the creation of another choreographic

masterpiece — that of Massine's *Presages*. The originality, force and beauty of the grouping is such as few modern artists have as yet produced, and this ballet deserves to be considered as one of the finest plastic and linear works of art of this synchronised, mechanical age.

TEXTILES

By A F Kendrick

The textile art of Russia bears the traces of a composite origin, as would naturally be expected from the size of the country and its place on the map Russia lies on the threshold of East and West, covering a vast region which, in the course of ages, has suffered the incursions and settlements of many racial elements Never in the course of its history does this land appear to have evolved what may truly be called a unified national art

The earliest textiles associated with the territories included in what we now know as Russia are those found in the Crimean graves dating from the last centuries before the Christian era Together with the objects in other materials found at the same time, they are of unique value in throwing light upon the daily life of the peoples of those remote times and regions, and it is not surprising that they evoked the liveliest interest among students when systematic excavation began about a century ago

There is evidence that Greek navigators had found their way to the further shores of the Black Sea at an early date, perhaps by the beginning of the last millennium before Christ The outcome of such expeditions was the foundation of trading settlements, for intercourse with the nomad peoples—Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Goths and the like—who from time to time occupied the soil

It is natural that the superior culture of the Greeks should have set an unmistakable stamp

between the fifth and third centuries B.C. Further stuffs, including a few fragments of silken materials, may be of later date, though within the limits of the antique period.

The earliest centuries of the Middle Ages, when Russia was divided into a large number of petty principalities, often at war with one another, has little of textile art to show. The "Viking" period, comprising approximately the ninth to the twelfth centuries, is emphasised by the northern preference for interlacings and convoluted forms of animals, birds and reptiles. A common tradition may largely account for these assimilations to Scandinavian work.

Christianity was late in penetrating into Russia. Its effective introduction cannot be placed much earlier than the latter part of the tenth century. The new faith came northwards from Byzantium, bringing with it the characteristic and long-established forms of Byzantine art. This provided the dominant feature of ecclesiastical work, continuing

upon these things from the graves Whether they were invariably the work of people of Grecian blood may be a matter of conjecture At any rate the district whence they came is not generally included within the limits of the Greek world But it is safe to claim that they represent a phase of Greek art modified to a greater or less degree by local conditions The stuffs came to light mostly through the expert labours of the Russian Archæological Commission, extended over a period of nearly eighty years, after which its work was taken over by the Academy of Material Culture A number of discoveries were made at a still earlier date, though under conditions not so fully recorded Some of the textiles are to be found in the Museum established long ago in the vicinity of the graves at Kertch (the ancient Panticapæum) in the Crimea A few have found their way to Oxford and elsewhere, but the best are preserved in the Hermitage Museum The stuffs at Leningrad comprise a variety of textures and methods of ornamentation Certain figures from Greek mythology are represented A woman's robe of purple wool is embroidered in colours with an amazon and honeysuckle ornament A man's garment is of tapestry weaving in stripes Some woollen stuffs from a warrior's grave are painted or dyed in colours with chariots, warriors and goddesses, and another has geometrical ornament A man's cap is woven with a pattern of ducks and stags' heads A woman's garment has gold thread embroidery Indeed, much tangled gold thread was found in the graves, though the textile materials into which it was inwrought had mostly perished

These and others are attributed to the period

between the fifth and third centuries B C Further stuffs, including a few fragments of silken materials, may be of later date, though within the limits of the antique period

The earliest centuries of the Middle Ages, when Russia was divided into a large number of petty principalities, often at war with one another, has little of textile art to show The "Viking" period, comprising approximately the ninth to the twelfth centuries, is emphasised by the northern preference for interlacings and convoluted forms of animals, birds and reptiles A common tradition may largely account for these assimilations to Scandinavian work

Christianity was late in penetrating into Russia Its effective introduction cannot be placed much earlier than the latter part of the tenth century The new faith came northwards from Byzantium, bringing with it the characteristic and long-established forms of Byzantine art This provided the dominant feature of ecclesiastical work, continuing in the same tradition, though becoming progressively more and more lifeless, until long after its supersession in the land of its origin through the incursions and conquests of the Turks The Byzantine style in Russia gradually acquired a character of its own, especially with regard to the personages represented, though there was a steady adherence in essential points to the traditional formulas, leaving practically no free scope to the artist in matters of portraiture and grouping With the waning of the first inspiration there is a growing tendency to exuberance, which in textiles at times almost recalls the craft of the metalworker Heavy gold and silver

threadwork is embellished by the lavish use of stones and jewels

While not forgetting the Greek, Byzantine and Northern strains, perhaps the outstanding influence upon the mediæval and later textile art of Russia is that of the East Stores of sumptuous Oriental textiles, whether silk fabrics, embroideries or carpets, passing westward found their way into Russia, and large numbers went no farther People who may not have travelled in Russia, but who remember the great exhibition of Muhammadan art at Munich in 1910, will recall the superb examples of Persian and Near Eastern textiles from Russian collections exhibited there

The epoch of Mongolian supremacy, under which traffic and intercourse between Russia and the East was greatly facilitated, had come to an end by the beginning of the sixteenth century Moscow, founded some centuries before, then became the capital of a unified empire which gradually enlarged its borders until, by the end of the eighteenth century, it had practically reached its ultimate limits The sixteenth century witnessed an impulse of great artistic activity, leading to the employment of many foreign artists and craftsmen—Italians, Germans, French and others Trading relations with both East and West had long been fostered by the great fairs, where merchants congregated annually from distant lands, and where the broadcloth of England was exchanged for the silks of Asia

English seafaring traders, including in their cargoes the woollen stuffs for which our land had long been famous, penetrated into the White Sea, and taking advantage of the great rivers which opened out a route to the heart of Russia, appeared

at the Muscovy Court as early as the reign of Edward VI We read in Hakluyt's pages of the encouraging reception they met with at the Court of Ivan the Terrible Richard Chancellor in the year 1553 found the gentlemen in the royal antechamber, "all in cloth of gold, very sumptuous" The Tsar gave audience at one time in a garment of beaten gold, at another in a gown of silver His pavilion was covered with cloth of gold and silver, and set with stones His officers wore velvet or cloth of gold over their armour

Much of this splendour was Oriental, but the more sober stuffs of the West seem to have been not unwelcome The intercourse continued for many years The ambassador from the Tsar to Queen Mary in 1556 brought back to Russia "pieces of cloth and tissue" James I sent to the Tsar a piece of scarlet and other pieces of fine cloth To one of the princes was given a piece of crimson velvet, and to the Patriarch velvets and satins and an arm-chair covered with crimson velvet embroidered in gold After the Restoration, when the Tsar despatched a mission of congratulation to the English Court, Lord Carlisle carried to Russia, on the return visit in the year 1663, cloths of velvet, satin and damask, besides table-linen There is nothing to give the impression that these various embassies were carrying "coals to Newcastle" The Russian Court evidently drew largely upon foreign lands for its sumptuous textiles, and no doubt the English emissaries were doing very much the same as their competitors from elsewhere

The magnificence in dress of the Russian Court seems to have been quite on an Oriental scale The richness of the Tsar's robes was a matter of comment

as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century The impression upon the simple English merchants of the barbaric luxury they encountered at Moscow in Tudor times has already been noticed In the following century, a visitor saw in the Treasury at least fifty Imperial robes loaded with jewels, and coverlets bordered with pearls Nearer to our own times, the Empress Elizabeth is said to have left a wardrobe of 18,000 dresses at her death in 1761 *Much of this resplendence was due, no doubt, to the* workshops attached to the Imperial Court, after the historic model of the Eastern potentates

As time went on, factories to meet a wider need were set up in Russia, with the aid of foreign workmen There were French silk weavers in Russia as early as the time of Peter the Great Perhaps the most outstanding of the weaving establishments set up with foreign aid was the tapestry-factory founded by that monarch in the year 1716 A number of weavers and dyers of the Gobelins came to Russia from Paris in 1717, with Leblond the architect as their head Looms were set up at Ekaterinkhof, the suburb of St Petersburg The models copied were largely French The "tenture des Indes" of Desportes was more than once reproduced As the French weavers died off or returned to France, their place was taken by Russian pupils Under the Empress Anne the works were again fostered and improvement was made in the quality of the wool The tapestries of Biblical scenes in the Museum of Armour at Moscow are believed to be of this time The reign of Catherine II witnessed the most flourishing phase of the tapestry-works Pictures at the Hermitage were copied, and portraits of the

sovereigns and courtiers were woven Under Catherine's son and successor, Paul II, four of Raphael's Vatican frescoes were reproduced on the looms

Towards the middle of the century there was harder going for the works, when the exalted patronage under which they had thriven was in some degree withdrawn Commissions were sought for carpets and furniture coverings, and "Savonnerie" work became part of the daily routine During the career of the factory fresh weavers arrived from Paris and, it seems, from Brussels as well Portraits of Peter the Great and succeeding sovereigns were woven A panel of that monarch on horseback in a landscape, with an eagle over his head, is in the possession of the Marquess of Lothian at Blickling Hall in Norfolk A portrait of the Empress Catherine II was reproduced several times One example is in the Grand Ducal Palace at Darmstadt A screen panel, with a figure of Amphitrite, done in the contemporary French manner, and bearing in the top border the monogram of this Empress, was acquired for the Stieglitz Museum at St Petersburg A bust portrait of the Princess Dashkov, believed to be after Pietro di Rotari, was in the possession of the late Sir Hercules Read In the royal palace at Stockholm there is a series of panels given by Catherine II to King Gustavus III

The quality of the work at times might lead to confusion between the Russian and Parisian productions, but the outlines of the Russian tend to be less certain, and the colouring perhaps less subtle It has been pointed out that, while the underlying warp threads of the Gobelins portraits are upright,

those of the St Petersburg factory were, so far as we know, horizontal Perhaps it was a mistake to follow so closely on the heels of Paris Tapestry-work of this sort, vying with the painter's brush instead of pursuing its own natural forms of ex pression, is only truly successful when it is done supremely well as it was at times in France

Fine silks, brocades and velvets were also probably made at the Imperial factory, though certain private manufacturers are more important Of these, Marco Ciccani's factory at Moscow was the main one in the early eighteenth century, while after about 1750 the Russians Polyakov, Lazarev and Sopozhnikov succeeded the Italian Similar silks and velvets were also produced on behalf of certain nobles, some of whom actually owned looms on their own estates

Rugs and carpets, the specific invention of the nomad, are an indigenous product of regions included within the boundaries of Russia Often they are of the "ghilim" or smooth faced type, with figures, animals, flowers and other ornament, sometimes bearing dates from the latter half of the eighteenth century onwards The pile rugs of the Caucasus, with a medley of Oriental motives combined with diminutive figures and domestic animals reminiscent of the farmyard, form a most important class Carpets of the Savonnerie factory in Paris were brought into the country, and though it is supposed that the workers in this pile technique in the St Petersburg factory were responsible for some of the larger examples, none now existing in Russia, it appears, can be differentiated as of local production

Another industry which recalls the East is that of shawl making Approximately a century ago a

factory for such weavings existed at Kolokol'tsov, in the government of Simbirsk in Southern Russia The shawls, which had floral patterns delicately woven in wool, were very costly, and few only are known to exist at the present day

There has been, and is, an extensive industry of cotton-printing in Russia The sprig and other patterns used for dresses, shawls and the like, were similar to the contemporary productions of Western Europe Specimens shown at the Paris Exhibition of Modern Art in 1925 seemed to indicate that many of the old blocks or printing rollers were then still in use

The peasant art of Russia, like that of most countries, has its own traditions and motives, little influenced by the changing phases of the fashionable art of the day It is this which gives it a significance which may, now and again, be vainly looked for in a wider sphere Like the bird's nest, it is not amenable to criticism No doubt, through the length and breadth of the country, there are more variations than is generally supposed Here the peasant and his family find a place in the pattern There the design is of animals, birds and pots of flowers Again, we may recognise, in a palmette-design, Oriental "influence" But may not that be begging the question? A truer insight might discern a survival, through generations, of a native Asiatic strain Sometimes the embroidery is of gold, revealing a district where the peasant is well-to-do, and where the precious metal, so widely used by the early nomads, can be obtained at no great distance Cotton or linen stuff may be enhanced

by velvet or silk damask, where these more costly materials are to be had Men's smocks, like the women's aprons, are made gay with needlework Red, the madder dye of the Near East, is a colour much favoured

METAL WORK AND ENAMELS

By Leon Grinberg

"Being conducted into the chamber of presence, I beganne to wonder at the Maiestie of the Emperour: his seate was aloft, in a very royall throne, having on his head a Diademe, or Crowne of gold, apparelled with a robe all of Goldsmiths worke, and in his hand hee held a Scepter garnished, and beset with precious stones: and besides all other notes and apparances of honour, there was a Maiestie in his countenance proportionable with the excellencie of his estate; on the one side of him stoode his chiefe Secretarie, on the other side, the great Commander of silence, both of them arayed also in cloth of gold: and then there sate the Counsel of one hundred and fiftie in number all in line sort arayed, and of great state. The Messenger commeth, and called us to dinner: we goe, and being conducted into the golden Court, we finde the Emperour sitting upon an high and stately seate, apparelled with a robe of silver, and with another Diademe on his head: I was placed over against him, sit downe: in the middel of the room stoode a mightie Cupboord upon a square foote where upon stoode also a round boord, in manner of a Diamond, broade beneath, and towardes the toppe narrowe, and every steppe rose up more narrowe then another. Upon this Cupboorde was placed the Emperours plate, which was so much, that the very Cupboord it selfe was scant able to sustaine the waight of it: the better

by velvet or silk damask, where these more costly materials are to be had Men's smocks, like the women's aprons, are made gay with needlework Red, the madder dye of the Near East, is a colour much favoured

METAL WORK AND ENAMELS

By Leon Grinberg

"Being conducted into the chamber of presence, I beganne to wonder at the Maiestie of the Emperour: his seate was aloft, in a very royall throne, having on his head a Diademe, or Crowne of gold, apparelled with a robe all of Goldsmiths worke, and in his hand hee held a Scepter garnished, and beset with precious stones: and besides all other notes and apparances of honour, there was a Maiestie in his countenance proportionable with the excellencie of his estate; on the one side of him stoode his chiefe Secretarie, on the other side, the great Commander of silence, both of them arayed also in cloth of gold: and then there sate the Counsel of one hundred and fiftie in number all in line sort arayed, and of great state. The Messenger commeth, and called us to dinner; we goe, and being conducted into the golden Court, we finde the Emperour sitting upon an high and stately seate, apparelled with a robe of silver, and with another Diademe on his head: I was placed over against him, sit downe: in the middel of the room stoode a mightie Cupboord upon a square foote where upon stoode also a round boord, in manner of a Diamond, broade beneath, and towardes the toppe narrowe, and every steppe rose up more narrowe then another. Upon this Cupboorde was placed the Emperours plate, which was so much, that the very Cupboord it selfe was scant able to sustaine the waight of it: the better

painted designs. In the Tsar's palace artists had transformed his ceilings into the blue canopy of the sky, with the sun, moon and stars gazing down from above; all the icons in the corners of these rooms were covered with a precious armour of gold and silver frames studded with rubies and emeralds. At dinner time, servants carried round huge dishes in which entire swans were set, so cunningly dressed that they appeared alive. A whole train of artists and master craftsmen was attached to the Court; they worked from day to day and from year to year for their royal patron, fashioning every conceivable type of object. In their originality and exquisite execution their

productions stand out as works of art of the highest quality.

At this period a craftsman was not only one who could produce a brilliant rendering of another man's idea; he was able also to invent and to express his own conceptions. Indeed, the secret of the beauty, the harmony and the indescribable charm which is so characteristic of an ancient



FIG. 1.—Bratina or Loving-cup.

object surely lies in this close association of its maker's fully developed taste and his complete mastery of the technique in which he worked.

The remarkable inventiveness of the Russian metal worker is clearly illustrated by any example of the bratina or loving-cup, a typical Russian vessel of almost globular form (Fig. 1). A whole series of these ancient vessels, which have now become very scarce, were carefully measured some time ago for purposes of a museum catalogue, and

the figures revealed that the proportions of all these loving-cups were absolutely identical, and that each of them was shaped according to a single rule at every period and in every workshop The craftsman's inventive powers, his witty application of every conceivable method of ornament, was responsible for the creation, even within these narrow limits, of a variety seemingly so endless that the naked eye had never discovered the uniformity of the actual shape

The metal workers did not merely emboss or engrave their designs upon these cups , they learnt to adorn the whole body of the vessel with raised ornament of floral patterns and foliage, or with spoon shaped reliefs which produced "spoon bratinas" Again, they covered the whole vessel with alternate raised and sunk triangles, turning it into a "facet cup" Another favourite method of ornament was of stippled dots, divided into several types well known to the ancient silversmiths, such as "trickles," "grass," "scatter," "holes," and so on

The loving-cup held its own particular and definite place in the solemnly theatrical pageantry of old Russia It was from this vessel that toasts for a long life were drunk to the Tsar, the Patriarch or the host at the beginning of every dinner Because of this the rim of the cup was almost invariably engraved with the words "A good man's loving cup , drink his health" At times the owner's name was substituted in place of the anonymous "good man," and in such cases the books containing lists of State officials enable us to establish the cup's exact date

The earliest loving cups which have come down

to us belong to the beginning of the sixteenth century, but there can be no doubt that similar ones existed long before that time A Sasanian silver vessel in the Hermitage Museum of the eighth or ninth century is of very similar shape, and it is more than probable that the loving cup came to Russia from the East The form remained popular in Russia till the eighteenth century

The ladle, or kovsh, is another object characteristic of Russia (Fig 2) This is an elongated, flat

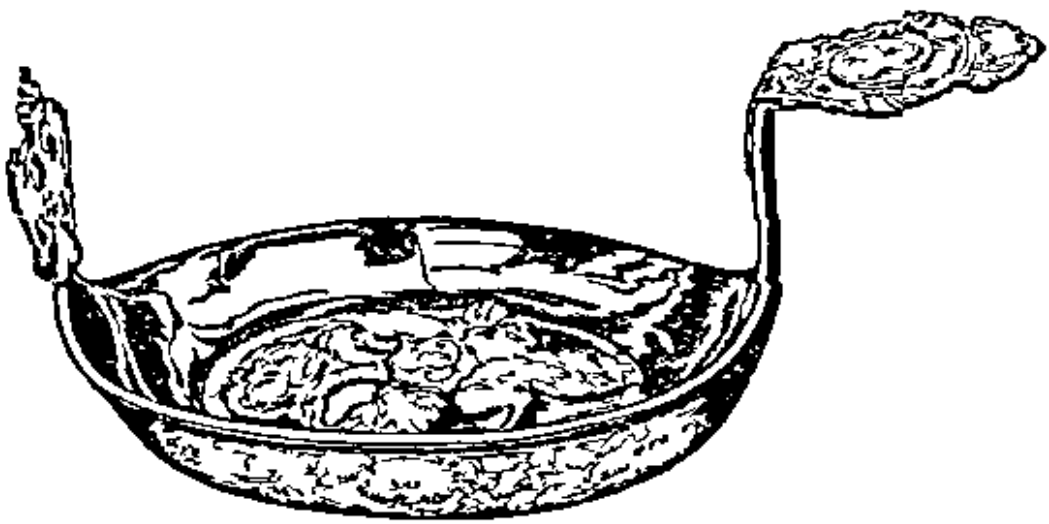


Fig 2 —Kovsh or Ladle (1748)

vessel, shaped like the hull of a ship, with a point at one end and a handle at the other, bent at a right angle Medium sized ladles, measuring from nine to seventeen inches in length, were dipped into a large vessel of wine, and then used for drinking They were frequently presented by the Tsars to those whom they wished to reward This custom was particularly prevalent in the second half of the seventeenth century, and only ended with the reign of Alexander I , who actually presented very few of them The custom was revived a century later by the Emperor Nicolas II The rims of these

presentation ladles were engraved with an inscription, stating the occasion and date on which the ladle was presented, as well as the name of the recipient It was cut in stylised, often even in interlaced letters, and assumed the character of a decoration (Fig 3) In the centre and on the point a kovsh of this type generally bears the double-headed eagle, whilst the Tsar's initials or his image were worked upon the handle Ladles were generally rewards for military achievements, but it was also the custom to present them to the collectors of the tax on wines At that date silver was of great intrinsic value in Russia and, except in the small set of rich and distinguished courtiers, this metal was very rarely met with in everyday life, a fact which helped to make the Tsar's gifts additionally precious

The Tsars of Russia collected silver objects from generation to generation, using them both as decoration for their palaces, and also as a reserve to fall back on in evil days, such as those of the civil strife during the "Interregnum" Most unfortunately this store had to be called upon in 1611-1612 in order that the unusual expenditure incurred during the political troubles might be met, and hundreds of pounds of valuable and ancient metal work were melted down This is one of the chief reasons for the great scarcity of examples of secular Russian metal work of the sixteenth and preceding centuries

In the realm of the Church, fine examples of early Russian metal work have been somewhat better preserved Until recent times marvellous objects might be seen in Church and monastic treasuries Icons enclosed in precious coverings, all manner

of crosses, monstrances, Bible covers adorned with enamels and gold scroll-work, icon lamps, censers shaped as minute cathedrals with bulbous domes, chalices with such subjects as the Deesis finely engraved upon them, patens, star-shaped covers, mitres and many other objects for ceremonial use were carefully preserved in these institutions.

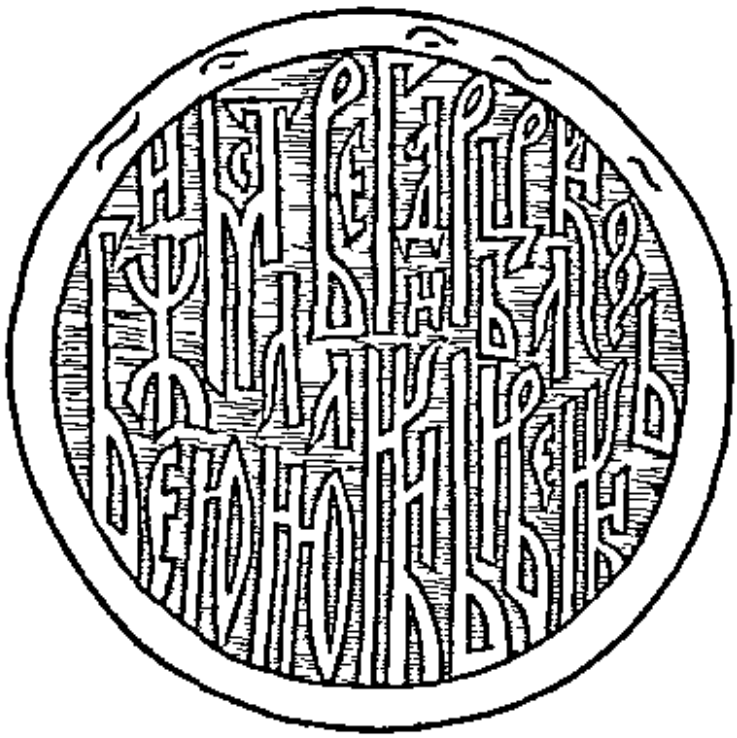


Fig 3.—Inscription on a Kovsh given by Peter the Great.

The tastes and tendencies of their day are clearly reflected in these objects. Thus in the fifteenth and sixteenth century silversmiths preferred the smooth quality of the metal, emphasising the beauty of this with a niello design, or with a sparse dotting of a few precious stones. In the seventeenth century, however, smooth surfaces disappeared altogether, and an ornamental design covered the whole object both on its face, and frequently also on the inside, as for instance in the wine-tasters,

ladles, small cups or other flat vessels of the period In contrast with earlier work, we now find that the pattern no longer served to decorate the plain surface of the object, but that plain areas on the reverse were used to adorn portions of the pattern

It is a somewhat curious fact that the architectural forms of ancient Russia became the favourite subjects for embossing, especially in ecclesiastical objects Here incense boxes, sacrament-chests, or censers, frequently took the form of little metal churches with domes, fanciful pediments, columns, and all the other architectural details At times these were very exactly reproduced, at others they were altered to suit the most fantastic whims of their makers

The metal worker was not the least embarrassed by the heaviness of his material, and he daringly combined floral ornaments with human and animal forms in his creations Russian silversmiths possessed an equal mastery over all the techniques of metal work, they were as much at ease and were as accomplished artists when producing chiselled, embossed, engraved or stamped ornament, niello work or filigree, and their use of these various techniques can frequently be observed on a single object The art of enamelling should, however, be placed at the head of their accomplishments, for though this is the process which allows most scope for the workman's powers of artistic invention, it is also one of the most difficult techniques to master

Cloisonné enamelling, which is purely Eastern in its origin, was familiar to Russia from very early

times, so also was the art of champleve enamelling It is, however, extremely difficult, if not wholly impossible, to determine whether a specific object was made by a Russian or by a foreign master The first definite examples of Russian cloisonne enamelling are to be dated to the fourteenth century, and seem very clumsy when compared with those of Byzantine workmanship It is unlikely that this form of enamelling ever became general in Russia, for the difficult conditions which marked the period of the Tartar invasion must also have hindered the development of this extremely complicated technique, which demands a thorough knowledge of chemistry as well as taste and talent In addition, cloisonne enamelling was at this date passing through a period of decline in Byzantium itself

Few examples of fifteenth and sixteenth century Russian enamels survive, but in those that have come down to us, the actual enamel seems to play a secondary part The famous Gospels at the Troitse-Sergeyeva Lavra, dated 1392, has a filigree worked binding decorated with numerous bosses bearing images of saints upon an enamelled ground The colours of the enamels—blue, black, green and purple—are muddy, the tones dull, and the melting defective

In surviving examples of a later date, that is to say of the fifteenth and first quarter of the sixteenth century, the quality of the enamel improves, and the colour scale expands, white, red, pink and turquoise blue being added to it But enamelling is still only used as a monochrome background to give a greater beauty to the embossed work of the metal

With the reign of John the Terrible a new

technical method was evolved better able to satisfy the Russian fondness for the sumptuous and the vivid It appears in the binding of the Gospels presented by the Tsar to the Simeon monastery in 1571 Here a filigree pattern on a gold ground takes on a new character, for it not only constitutes an ornament in itself, but also serves to outline a design formed of closed in compartments containing variously toned, delicately coloured enamels These small enamelled partitions, separated by lacelike filigree work in gold, form a sort of mosaic and create an impression of uncommon richness This new style suited the taste of the day to perfection It established itself firmly in Russian art, gradually reaching greater perfection, and indulging in many a variation, so that in the seventeenth century we find it applied alike to gold, silver and copper work At the end of the nineteenth century Moscow manufacturers attempted to revive this technique and it is objects of this date which are known to every one in the West as Russian enamels '

The seventeenth century was the period in which Russian enamelling reached its highest point of development, and the art was at this time affected by influences which penetrated the country both from the East and the West The colour scale was altered and became extraordinarily rich and bright, the enamel itself acquired a new transparent quality, painted enamelling evolved and reached a stage of high development in a remarkably short time All kinds of small boxes, mugs, ladles, saucers and bowls with decoration in painted enamel, enclosed at times in a filigree border, became popular The painted enamels were usually decorated with scenes from the Old Testament, with curious illustrations

of national proverbs, or with animals and exotic flowers

Moscow was not the only centre of manufacture of original objects with gaily coloured and amusing decoration We find another centre in the second half of the seventeenth century in the district of Vologda, in the limitless estates of the Stroganovs At times the masterly Stroganov enamellers were even summoned to the Tsar s Muscovite workshops

Western engravings exercised quite a considerable influence on Russian enamelling, their influence being apparent partly in the choice of the subjects and partly in the actual drawing For instance, separate flower petals disclose, more particularly in the shading, a characteristic, generally a perpendicular stroke, executed in the firm graphic lines of the kind usually found in wood engravings This gives all the ornamental motives a somewhat flat appearance The influence of the Stroganov school of miniature icon painters can be traced in the work of the Vologda enamellers, and it is quite within the bounds of possibility that the origin of the school of portrait painting upon enamel which found its ablest masters in Gregory Musikiski and Andrew Ovsov under Peter the Great, and in Zharkov and Evreinov under Catherine II, is to be found here

Under Peter the Great, and indeed throughout the whole of the eighteenth century, enamelling declined, the colours became poorer, the shapes lost their beauty, the ornament became coarser and clumsier, and the work took on an artisan character Enamelling was now employed for a new class of objects, such as trays, snuff boxes, goblets, tea pots, and the like They were enamelled

smooth surfaces and clearly outline a rhythmical ornament, creating remarkable effects by transforming the unadorned surfaces into flowers, circles and other patterns Often these plain surfaces were enamelled In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Western influences began to affect the filigree ornamentation, and by degrees the designs lost their lightness, their airiness and transparency, until they had gradually given place to embossed decoration, enamelling and ornamentation of precious stones The art of filigree declined along with that of enamelling, but objects combining ornaments in both techniques rank amongst the finest works of decorative art in the Russia before Peter the Great

Russian metal workers also made interesting use of niello This technique had been widely diffused throughout Western Europe at the time of the Renaissance, but it had lost most of its popularity by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries In Russia, on the contrary, the seventeenth and eighteenth are the very centuries during which this technique was at its best Frequently black niello was used alone for decorating an object, but examples survive in which the black colour served as a dark background to show up large gilt flowers, animals or other designs in engraving The dark background was obtained by covering the metal surface with a thick, exceedingly delicate lace work of black lines, executed in minute twists and dots In the eighteenth century niello snuff-boxes, goblets, cups, crosses, buttons, and other small objects bearing crests, initials, animals, mythological or pastoral scenes, became very popular Large objects decorated in this technique, such as icon

Gradually they altered their tastes and methods to suit the desires of their new patrons The foreign elements they had introduced gradually became subjected to a definite Russian influence

In 1815 the Englishman Plincke opened a workshop in St Petersburg Several years later he is to be found in partnership with his countryman Nichols at the head of a firm called " The English Shop " The firm flourished, remaining in existence till 1870 and coming in for the greater share of the Court's patronage It is obvious that the taste for things English which developed in Russia in the



Fig 4 —Marks of Plincke and Nichols

first half of the nineteenth century was due in part to Plincke and Nichols In its early years the firm sent to England for its goods, and had the orders placed by the Imperial Court also executed in England Soon, however, it took to manufacturing its stock in Russia, partly in its own workshops, partly in others in St Petersburg, though in both cases English designs were followed Three marks of Plincke and Nichols are shown in Fig 4

An interest in the antiquities of the country also grew up in Russia in the nineteenth century The superb museum known as the Palace of Arms in the Moscow Kremlin was now opened to the public , monumental volumes containing coloured reproductions of Russia's finest ancient works of art appeared, and private collectors of Russian art

came into being As a result of this, the metal workers of the period took both actually to copying ancient objects and also to creating new ones inspired by these antiques Work of this character was produced by the firms of Sazikov, Khlebnikov, Grachov, Olovyanishnikov, Ovchinnikov, and more particularly of Faberge Most of the objects turned out in mass by these workshops are devoid of artistic merit, but some of their productions, executed with particular care and taste, are of fine quality, and collectors have already begun to seek for them

In conclusion, a few words must be said about Russian hall marks The first hall mark to have come down to us dates from the second half of the seventeenth century At first ingots were stamped with a small double headed eagle, though this hall mark was often either defaced, or at times even completely obliterated by the strokes of the metal worker's hammer The system proved so ineffective in fact, that it soon became customary to stamp the finished object rather than the un worked metal Two types of hall mark were used in the seventeenth century The first indicated the date in Slav lettering, as in Nos 1 and 2, where the letters stand for the figures 194 and 206 respectively, that is to say for the years 7194 and 7206 from the creation of the world, or the years 1686 and 1698 new style The second type of hall mark was used to denote the grade of the metal (No 3) Its three letters formed the first syllable of the Russian word "levok" (little lion), and implied that the object was made from metal of the same grade as that used for the coin of that name In the seventeenth



FIG 5.—Russian Hall marks

1 Hall mark of year 7194 from the creation of the world (1686) 2 Hall mark of year 7206 from the creation of the world (1698) 3 Hall mark of grade seventeenth century 4 Mark denoting Imperial ownership (seventeenth century) 5 Mark denoting the object to be in the possession of the Patriarchal Treasury 6 Local hall mark Moscow 7 Local hall mark Irkutsk 8 Local hall mark Kazan 9 Local hall mark Kostroma 10 Hall mark of Moscow 11 Hall mark of St Petersburg 12 Inspectors mark with date 13 Local hall mark (St Petersburg) with date 14 Local hall mark (Moscow) with date 15 Maker's mark 16 Grade indication

century the metal worker very seldom placed his own mark upon an object, though in the eighteenth century the practice became general.

Certain seventeenth century objects also often bear the mark either of a double-headed eagle (No. 4), or of a hand performing a blessing (No. 5). These marks do not refer to the metal, but indicate the object's owner, the double-headed eagle being affixed to articles belonging to the Tsar and his household, the hand performing a blessing to those owned by the Patriarchal Treasury.

From the year 1700 onwards Peter the Great devoted much attention to drawing up regular hall-marks. He passed a number of decrees legalising a new series of marks, which superseded and cancelled the older ones. Local hall-marks bearing the arms of the town in which the object had been tested alone became legal (Nos. 6, 7, 8 and 9). However, prior to the year 1741, Moscow and St Petersburg frequently used the double-headed eagle with the word "Moscow" (No. 10), or the initials of St Petersburg (No. 11) beneath, in place of their coat of arms. This was followed by the inspector's mark consisting of his initials, which was almost invariably rectangular in shape. The date, which was legally essential, never appeared detached, but was always added either to the inspector's mark (No. 12) or to that of the town (Nos. 13 and 14). Finally the maker came to add his mark to the others. It occurs in various forms, generally consisting either of two or three initials (No. 15), or else of his full name. The mark certifying the grade of the metal only appeared in the second half of the eighteenth century. It expressed in figures the number of zolotniks of

pure metal incorporated in each pound of alloy (There were 96 zolotniks to the Russian pound) At the end of the eighteenth century a law was passed, which remained in force till the year 1917, forbidding the manufacture of objects in silver of a lower grade than 84 (No 16) This measure corresponded to 875 milliemes Objects which were to be enamelled were often made of finer silver, marked 88 (916 milliemes) The Russian mark 91 corresponds to sterling silver (950 milliemes), and is only found on silver objects made for export

The legal hall mark for gold was finally established early in the nineteenth century, it was set at 56 (14 carats or 583⅓ milliemes), objects made for enamelling or for export at 72 (18 carats or 750 milliemes)

THE ART OF THE BOOK

By Paul Apostol

The art of fine book production is dependent on a very great number of diverse elements, and no other branch of applied art has had to satisfy such varied demands of quality. These demands can be classed under three heads. The first concerns the quality of the material of which the book is made, namely, the paper and ink. The second deals with its appearance, that is to say its lettering, decorations, title heads, colophons, illustrations, typesetting, its size and its margins and, above all, the interrelationship between the lettering, adornments and illustrations. The third demand is that there should be a close connection between the outward appearance of the book, the contents and the character of the epoch to which it belongs.

If a book is to be a thing of real beauty it must show an harmonious blend of the efforts of the artist who supplied the decoration, illustrations and lettering, and those of the typographer responsible for the arrangement of the margins, paragraphs and the spacing of words and lines. Finally, it must reflect the feeling of the period in which it was produced. A book such as this is a definite work of art, living a life which is independent, though closely bound to the contents; it is akin in a way to the architecture of a building, which is also independent, though it must reflect distinctly and clearly the purpose for which it was erected. Some books combine all the above requirements: for

instance, the earliest printed books or incunabula, of the fifteenth century in the West and the sixteenth in Russia But apart from such perfect books there are many which are undoubtedly fine, though they do not present so complete and harmonious a standard of excellence, since one of the necessary elements predominates above the other

Russian book production was responsible for work of really fine quality at various periods But what is particularly remarkable in Russian books is that they admirably portray the character of the age to which they belong Such books are distinctive, and always reflect the cultured, artistic aspirations of their day, though the fascination that they can exercise can only be enjoyed to the full by those who are familiar with the history of Russia, and who know her social and literary movements

The art of printing only reached Russia a century after its invention by Gutenberg, and the first book with a date produced in the country belongs to the year 1564 Several ecclesiastical books were, however, printed in Moscow between the years 1550-1560, but it is not known exactly where or by whom they were produced, or to what exact year they belong The insufficiency of Bibles and books dealing with Church ritual, and the inaccurate character of existing texts, due to the errors of ignorant and careless copyists, led John the Terrible to lay the foundation stone of the State Printing Offices in 1553 The deacon, Ivan Fedorov, was placed at the head of the completed institution, and he is considered as Russia's first master printer In 1564 he produced an edition of the later books

of the New Testament, which was followed a year later by two Breviaries. From the very first, book production in Russia reached a very high standard for much the same reason as in the West of Europe; in both cases the superb lettering and beautiful ornament of the manuscripts served as models. Russia's first master printers were, like their Western colleagues, missionaries, inspired masters of their art. Nekrasov, an historian of Russian printing, writes: "Book printing originated in the West from wood engravings; in Russia it appeared together with block printing. The printed book and the printed decoration in the book were closely bound, and from their very first steps they disclosed Russian taste and her old familiarity with graphic art." The lettering of Russia's first printed books was designed in the country, and the texts were embellished with a very large number of capital letters and fine illuminations. In the book of 1564 a floral ornament in white upon a black ground formed of intricately interlaced grasses, stems and flowers, and a large engraving of St Luke, were borrowed from German models; but they were worked out in conformity with the style both of Russian manuscripts and illuminations and with that of Russian ornament.[1]

[1] Ivan Fedorov's printed books led to discontent among manuscript copyists, and in certain Church circles, and the printing offices were hence set on fire. Ivan Fedorov, together with his assistant Peter Mstislavetz, moved to L'vov, Ostrog and Vil'na, where they continued printing. In Moscow book printing was resumed only in 1568.

In 1647 the first secular Russian book appeared with illustrations engraved on copper. It was entitled "The Science and Art of Military Training for the Infantry." In 1649 the first legal book was published, consisting of an

All Russian books prior to the year 1708 were printed in the old Slavonic Church lettering, reminiscent of Greek Recognising the importance of the role which the book could play in assuring the success and glorification of his reforms, Peter I, the great transformer of Russia, took a deep interest in printing He aimed at bringing this branch of Russian culture, like all others, into closer touch with Western Europe, and he instituted a new secular lettering of a more Latin character, to be used for all books of other than an ecclesiastical nature This reform greatly simplified reading, and rendered literature more accessible to the masses The first book to be printed in secular lettering was a Geometry, which appeared in 1708 It was embellished with a copper-plate frontispiece representing Allegory, and 135 engraved diagrams with coloured views of forts and castles

During the reign of Peter I, 295 books[1] were printed About half of these were illustrated with copper-plates by Dutch engravers and their Russian pupils "The Marcian Book," published in 1713, stands out as the most beautiful, both on account of the wealth and the quality of its engravings These volumes may be regarded as the

edition, with some ornamentation, of the code of Aleksey Mikhaylovich, in 1685 appeared the first dramatic work It was illustrated with copper engravings and was called The Comedy of the Parable of the Prodigal Son, in 1692 was published the famous Alphabet by Istomin, again illustrated with copper engravings

[1] There is no exact equivalent in English for the Russian "khudozhestvennava kn[illegible] or "livre d[illegible] The word [illegible]nse of

incunabula of Russian secular printing They are closely bound to the age of Peter the Great, and show the mark of his innovations, giving a strikingly vivid and charming picture of the age They were mostly produced either to meet a need for purely scholastic, practical information, or else in order to introduce the customs of West European civilisation to Russian life Quite a number of these volumes were printed purely in order to glorify Peter and his reforms—purposes which would now be termed purely propagandist However, it is not only the reforms of Peter I that are their subject The pastimes and holidays, the fireworks and pageantry of his Court are also portrayed in their illustrations In the art of the book again, as in all else in Peter I's day, the subject was approached in accordance with Western methods

As the century proceeded, the somewhat clumsy appearance of the books of Peter's reign gradually gave place to greater dexterity, and towards the year 1800, volumes of a definitely high quality are found The magnificence and splendour of Court life became, throughout the rule of successive Empresses, one of the chief subjects with which elaborate books were concerned Under the rule of Anna Ioannovna, six out of the nineteen fine books to be published dealt with triumphs and festivals The finest of these describes the Empress's coronation (1730), and is embellished with her portrait, as well as with fifteen pages of engravings Other lovely editions of the period are "A Description of the Chambers of the Academy of Fine Arts" (in folio with a frontispiece and twelve

engravings), and a "Description of Japan" (four engravings)

Throughout the reign of Elizabeth Petrovna Court functions and festivities came to be increasingly popular According to the calculations of Shibanov, a famous authority on Russian books, a third of the whole number of fine volumes produced during this reign dealt with Court activities The pearl of this period, in fact the pearl of all Russian books, deals with the Empress Elizabeth's coronation It bears her portrait and is decorated with a quantity of delightful title pieces, and with forty-nine pages of engravings The finest depicts the main ceremonial procession and includes a great number of small figures Another fine book of the period which deserves special mention is the "Atlas of the Russian Empire" (1745) Here all the maps are illustrated with engraved cartoons More notable still is the plan of St Petersburg, done in 1753, with which were issued the twelve famous views of the capital by Makheev Though these views were partly idealised and do not altogether conform with reality, they convey a splendid impression of the magnificence of the palaces and public buildings in the rapidly growing capital Under Elizabeth a superb Bible of a thousand pages was published with a beautiful portrait of the Empress as frontispiece, and a number of fine decorations

A new period in the history of the Russian book was inaugurated under Catherine II, for book production lost its purely official, governmental character Permission was now granted for the

installing of private printing presses, and gradually this led to the creation of a more general reading public, at first, of course, very small and drawn from among the upper members of society Books dealing only with the dissemination of military and technical sciences and with the glorification of the government were supplemented by others of a wider appeal, serving to convey a more general culture to the people A special institution dealing with translation of foreign books was now formed, and a liberal literature appeared, expressing the views of those in opposition such as Radistchev and Novikoff, though this soon led to persecutions by the government Private and public libraries were created, and even a famous private press was formed by a provincial bibliophile, Struyski, Catherine's admirer Foreign artists and illustrators came to Russia and superb eighteenth century French art of book illustration began to exercise an important influence in Russia As a result the book acquired an elegant appearance which is often as pleasing as that found in West European volumes Even official publications, such as "Nakaf,"[1] "The Establishment of the Educational Institution," "A Collection of Laws and Decrees concerning Education in Russia," and so forth, appeared with fine frontispieces, letter-heads and engravings Beautifully produced descriptions of Russian costumes and military uniforms were published by Georgi and Geissler, and the works of Russian writers were illustrated and decorated, above all the works of Catherine herself

Under Alexander I the art of the book continued

[1] Instructions issued to a Commission for editing a new Code of Laws.

Although the illustrations and embellishments of these four splendid volumes were wood engravings, it was just at about this time that lithography began to play an important part in Russian book illustration The first example appeared in 1818 Then, between 1823 and 1833 one hundred and twelve volumes decorated with lithographic illustrations were published, between 1833 and 1844 there were two hundred and seventy-eight, the finest of which is "The Theatrical Album" of 1842, between the years 1845 and 1859 six hundred and twelve volumes were illustrated in this way Russian lithography reached its summit of excellence in "The Russian Literary Sheet," published by V Timm between 1851 and 1862, a remarkably graphic chronicle of Russian life of the time

The second half of the nineteenth century is the poorest and least interesting period in the history of the Russian book. Throughout these years innumerable volumes were published, many fine illustrators and designers were employed, such as Zichi, Charlemagne, Lebedev, Panov, Shmelev, Boklevsky, Karamzin and others, and some of the books were really interesting, being illustrated by the best painters of the day—Repin, Vroubl, Polenov and Serov Such were the 1891 edition of Lermontov's collected works, or some of the illustrated editions of the State Papers Despatch Office But on the whole book production was, like the style of the epoch, lacking in unity, and from the third quarter of the nineteenth century the Russian book became overcharged with chromolithography, ...phy, and every conceivable kind of photo-

to reflect the general trend of the cultured and artistic life of the country At the beginning of the century academic classicism, and the copying of the antique was the vogue, in conformity with David's theories of art The Empire style in Russia is fully reflected in the fine books which shows the influence of Flaxman (F Tolstoy's "Collection of Medals" and 'Lyric Album"), or Prudhon (A Brullov's "Works of Batyushkov," Ivanov's "Odes of Horatius, etc") The more cultured and learned aspect of the reign finds expression in the splendid historical editions of the Rumyantsev Society

The second quarter of the nineteenth century is marked by the most glorious period in the history of the Russian book The Russian romantic movement had illuminated all Russian art, and it naturally affected book production also The book responded again to the brilliant flowering of contemporary literature (illustrations of Galactionov, Maydel, the literary almanacks, etc) One form of Russian romanticism provided the art of the book with a purely national, lively yet observant trend Four masterpieces of the period represent this development "The Travelling Carriage" by Count V Sologub, with illustrations by Agin and Gagarin, "A Hundred and Four Scenes" from Gogol s "Dead Souls," by Agin, "Our Friends Transcribed from Nature," by V Timm, and "The Sensation of Mrs Kurdyukov," by Myatlev, with illustrations by Timm In fact, so great is the number of superb books produced at this period, that it is impossible to refer in so short an article even to the finest volumes of the time

Although the illustrations and embellishments of these four splendid volumes were wood engravings, it was just at about this time that lithography began to play an important part in Russian book illustration The first example appeared in 1818 Then, between 1823 and 1833 one hundred and twelve volumes decorated with lithographic illustrations were published, between 1833 and 1844 there were two hundred and seventy-eight, the finest of which is "The Theatrical Album" of 1842, between the years 1845 and 1859 six hundred and twelve volumes were illustrated in this way Russian lithography reached its summit of excellence in "The Russian Literary Sheet," published by V Timm between 1851 and 1862, a remarkably graphic chronicle of Russian life of the time

The second half of the nineteenth century is the poorest and least interesting period in the history of the Russian book Throughout these years innumerable volumes were published, many fine illustrators and designers were employed, such as Zichi, Charlemagne, Lebedev, Panov, Shmelev, Boklevsky, Karamzin and others, and some of the books were really interesting, being illustrated by the best painters of the day—Repin, Vroubl, Polenov and Serov Such were the 1891 edition of Lermontov's collected works, or some of the illustrated editions of the State Papers Despatch Office But on the whole book production was, like the style of the epoch, lacking in unity, and from the third quarter of the nineteenth century the Russian book became overcharged with chromolithography, oligraphy, and every conceivable kind of photo-

graphic and mechanical process The century ended in an inflation of production and a complete dearth of fine work

The return to a more promising era in the life of the Russian book stands out against this dull background with increased vividness The revival was the result of a new outlook, launched in the art journal "The World of Art" (Mir Iskusstva), edited by Serge Dyaglev Dyaglev and the remarkable critic and painter, Alexander Benois, were the inspired leaders of this movement, which was mainly responsible for starting a reaction against the realist tendencies and political aims of late nineteenth century art The revival made itself vividly felt in the art of book illustration, inspiration being sought in the past ages both of Western Europe and of Russia This somewhat retrospective art was, however, no mere copying of foreign models A large number of Russian book illustrators, remarkable both for their talent and for their superb technique, though they at times sought inspiration abroad, nevertheless embodied the Russian spirit in a lovely form Side by side with this movement development took place along another course, though the underlying ideal was similar The chief figure was I Bilibine, who found his inspiration entirely in the scenery and earlier arts of Russia, but who resorted to a great degree of stylisation

This period stands out as markedly original, and in a short time the art of the book was restored to a high position There is only, however, one reproach than can be made against the World of

Art painters, namely, that their illustrations were always reproduced by mechanical means and hardly ever took the form either of engravings, etchings or autolithographs. A number of superb illustrated wrappers stand out especially in this period; at times indeed the wrappers represented the sum total of the book's decoration. No less characteristic were a quantity of finely illustrated children's books. All the more outstanding artists of the movement turned at one time or another to the illustration and decoration of books; thus A. Benois was responsible for the illustrations in Pushkin's "The Queen of Spades," "The Copper Horseman" and "Alphabet" to name but three. K. A. Somov produced "Le Livre de la Marquise," as well as a number of illustrated wrappers, title-pages and capital letters; E. Lanceray was responsible for the illustrations in Tolstoy's "Hadji Murat," "Wrangel's Wreath," etc.; M. Dobuzhinski for a series of drawings entitled "The Town," illustrations to Dostoevski's "White Nights" and Lermontov's "The Treasurer's Wife," as well as for views of St Petersburg and many more; G. Narbut for Krylov's fables, "Alphabet," etc.; S. Tchekhonin for a large number of wrappers and book decorations; I. Bilibin for the illustrations to Russian legends; and this to name but a few. Space forbids us even to name all the other artists of the period who were engaged in fine book production, let alone to attempt any description of their work.

The World of Art movement brings us to the last page in the history of pre-revolutionary book production in Russia. The revolution struck fine book production a devastating blow and, with the

exception of a few feeble efforts at a revival, no fine books were produced for a number of years ; then, once again, there appeared interesting book designs and embellishments. This new period lies beyond the scope of this chapter, though the importance of the work must be noted. A number of eminent graphic artists of the World of Art movement, as well as other talented designers, emigrated abroad, where the production of Russian books still continues. Such are N. Goncharova, Alekseev, Annenkov and others.

exist In 1747 the Empress handed over the kilns to a Russian engineer, Dimitri Winogradov, who was the inventor of Russian porcelain He died eleven years later, and his incessant labours led to the creation of a definite style of production easily recognisable by its paste and the style of its decoration

All the Elizabethan porcelain is of very simple shape, with none of the rococo ornamentation so typical of the Meissen work of the period The most ambitious undertaking was a service for the Court, called "Her Majesty's Private Service" The vessels are covered with a trellis in relief and are painted in pale mauve and gold, open work baskets with wreaths of multicoloured flowers upon them form a part of the service The museum attached to the works preserves also part of a tea set entirely gilt, and ornamented with flowers in different colours In order not to burn the gilding the temperature was never high enough to produce a vivid blue, the blue is hence invariably pale The mark was a blue W, for Winogradov, or later a black Imperial eagle Later a dot in a circle appeared, or sometimes an arrow, or, more rarely, two anchors put crosswise (the coat of arms of St Petersburg) A few years after Catherine II 's accession—there is no information as to the exact date—her monogram was adopted, and from then on the Emperor's monogram was the only mark for the whole of the factory's production during each reign

In Catherine II 's time (1762-1796) the works reached their full development and their output was very considerable They produced a number of beautiful dinner services, of which the one

ordered by the Empress for Count Gregory Orlov in the first years of her reign is one of the most famous It bears his initials (G G O) in the middle of each plate, and is painted in gold and blue The so called "Arabesque" service (1784), the arabesques being in the Pompeian style with cameos and classical allegorical figures, may also be noted It was for sixty guests, was composed of 973 pieces and cost 25,000 roubles (£2500) [1]

In 1779 the sculpture department of the factory was entrusted to a gifted French sculptor Rachette, and the Empress ordered from him a set of figures showing the different nationalities living in Russia There are two series one white, the other coloured A similar collection was started towards the end of the reign of Emperor Nicholas II , but with figures on a larger scale

During the reign of the Emperor Paul I (1796-1801), St Petersburg porcelain excelled in the painting of flowers The Emperor took a great interest in the works and gave numerous orders The things made for his personal use bear his mark in gold In the time of Alexander I (1801-1825) the porcelain of the Imperial factory was mostly in the classical taste, which ruled the whole of Europe at that time, but several figures of popular types were also made, in which a dull unglazed blue predominated They also showed a

[1] Another is the "Yacht" service, the central decorative subject is a black eagle with its wings spread out holding a laurel wreath and a flag with the two anchors, this service was only finished in the reign of Paul I A service for everyday use at Court, of which numerous plates and soup tureens exist, was also made It is decorated with flowers in all colours naturalistically painted It bears on the reverse the initials of two Russian words meaning "Court Office"

more or less faithful rendering of the cloth of men's coats and the chintz of peasant girls' frocks The style of Nicholas I (1825-1856), corresponding to the early Victorian period in England, showed a great versatility, it produced and imitated all sorts of things, from Dresden shepherdesses to Japanese jars, yet with an unmistakable flavour of its own epoch The next reign, that of Alexander II (1856 1882), developed an interest for nationalistic ornament, and applied in all seriousness the decoration used by peasants for their embroideries and household woodwork to dinner services, on which it looked sorely out of place The personal taste of Emperor Alexander III (1881-1894), who was strongly influenced by Denmark, the country of his consort, made him prompt the Imperial factory to imitate the style of Copenhagen china, with its pale colours, naturalistic reproductions of animals and its Japanese decorative schemes

In the reign of Emperor Nicholas II, this style at first continued in favour, but it was later replaced by a variety of attempts in various styles, and by a return to the figurines which had been the distinctive characteristic of a number of small private factories in Russia in the early nineteenth century The Imperial factory, though always the most important, touched but part of the ground covered by Russian porcelain in the history of the art

The first private factory was that of Francis Gardner, an Englishman, who emigrated to Russia in the middle of the eighteenth century The necessary permit for starting a porcelain factory was granted to him in 1767, and he received many orders for the Court, regardless of the fact that the Imperial factory was there to execute them Thus

the Empress Catherine II gave to Gardner the orders for a number of dinner services decorated with the insignia of the different Orders for the yearly dinners of the Knights of those Orders The St George, St Andrew and St Alexander services were ordered in 1777, a fourth one, that of St Vladimir, was finished in 1785 For private customers Gardner made numerous copies of Meissen figures and services, but he also succeeded in producing a style of his own, easily recognisable in vases, plates or other vessels, with floral decorations

In the early nineteenth century the Gardner factory seems to have specialised mostly in tea and coffee sets and in small figurines, whereas the other European centres of production, with the exception of England and Vienna, had given up the latter speciality Gardner created a large number of popular types his coachmen, porters, hawkers, peasant girls, shopkeepers, all in their characteristic costumes, form an amusing and varied illustration of "men and women in the street" between 1820 and 1830 The factory remained in the hands of the Gardner family for 136 years, and was sold in 1891 to another porcelain manufacturer, Kuznetsov

A factory started near Moscow in the early nineteenth century was taken over by A Popoff in 1811 He greatly developed it and turned out a vast number of pieces His cups and saucers are frequently met with, but besides making plates and soup tureens for popular restaurants, he also produced more ambitious and more artistic work, such as clocks, inkstands, etc, remarkable for the quality of the colours and gilding After the death

of Alexis Popoff in 1850 the artistic level of the works began to dwindle, and eventually the factory was closed about 1890

About 1814, Prince Yussupov started a workshop *for painting porcelain in his country* seat at Arkhangelskoye The things he wished to decorate were mostly ordered in Sevres, but some also came from Popoff's factory His own servants, horses and carts kept up a regular service from Arkhangelskoye to Sevres for bringing in the cases of china This was never put on the market, but used in his household or given away as presents The painting of the plates and cups, marked "Arkhangelskoye," invariably reaches a high standard of perfection This production went on till 1831 That year saw the birth of the largest Russian factory, that of the Brothers Kornilov This factory made between 1830 and 1850 a very large number of dinner services, and also produced figures of popular types The workshop was closed at the revolution in 1918

In the province of Chernigov another private factory was started by a local landowner, Miklashevski, who took in a Frenchman, Darte, as overseer The work turned out there was typically Russian A great variety of objects they

the Poskochin, the Kozlov, the Batenin and the Safronov. Their productions were eagerly sought and collected before the revolution, and several books were published on their history, their characteristics and their different marks.

TABLE OF EMPERORS AND DATES

RURIK DYNASTY

	862	Varyags come to Novgorod under Rurik.
	988	Kiev centre under Oleg.
Svyatoslav.	964-972	
St Vladimir, The Great	980-1015	Christianity introduced, 988.
Yaroslav, The Wise.	1015-1054	Country united under Kiev.

After 1054 the country was again divided into principalities. The most important were Suzdal-Vladimir, Novgorod, Pskov, Smolensk, Ryazan, Tver, and Chernigov. Kiev remained the main centre of culture and power.

Isyaslav I.	1054-1073	
Svyatoslav.	1073-1076	
Vsevolod I.	1078-1093	
Svyatopolk II.	1093-1113	
Vladimir II., Monomachos.	1113-1125	
Mstislav I.	1125-1132	
Yaropolk.	1132-1139	
Vsevolod II.	1139-1146	
Isyaslav II.	1146-1154	
George Dolgoruki.	1154-1157	
Rostislav.	1159-1168	
Mstislav II.	1168-1169	
Andrew Bogolubski.	1169-1175	
Vsevolod III.	1176-1212	
Yaroslav.	1238-1245	
		1240, Mongol Invasion of Russia. The whole country is conquered, with the exception of Novgorod.
Alexander Nevski.	1252-1263	
Daniel, son of Alexander Nevski.	1303	*Circa* 1295 lays foundation of Moscow.
Ivan I., Kalita.	1328-1341	Ruler over Vladimir and Moscow; from 1328 Moscow had become chief principality.
Simeon, The Proud	1341-1353	
Ivan II.	1353-1359	
Demetrius Donskoi.	1362-1389	
Basil I.	1389-1425	
Basil II., The Blind.	1425-1462	

Table of Emperors and Dates

RURIK DYNASTY—*Continued*

Ivan III The Great Grand Duke of Moscow	1462	1505	Foundation of Muscovi Empire 1480 final ove throw of Tartar yoke
Basil III	1505	1533	
Ivan IV The Terrible	1533	1584	1547 assumed title of Ts of Muscovy First wif Anastasya Romanovr Romanova
Fedor I	1584	1598	The peasant made a serf

End of Dynasty of Rurik

NON DYNASTIC

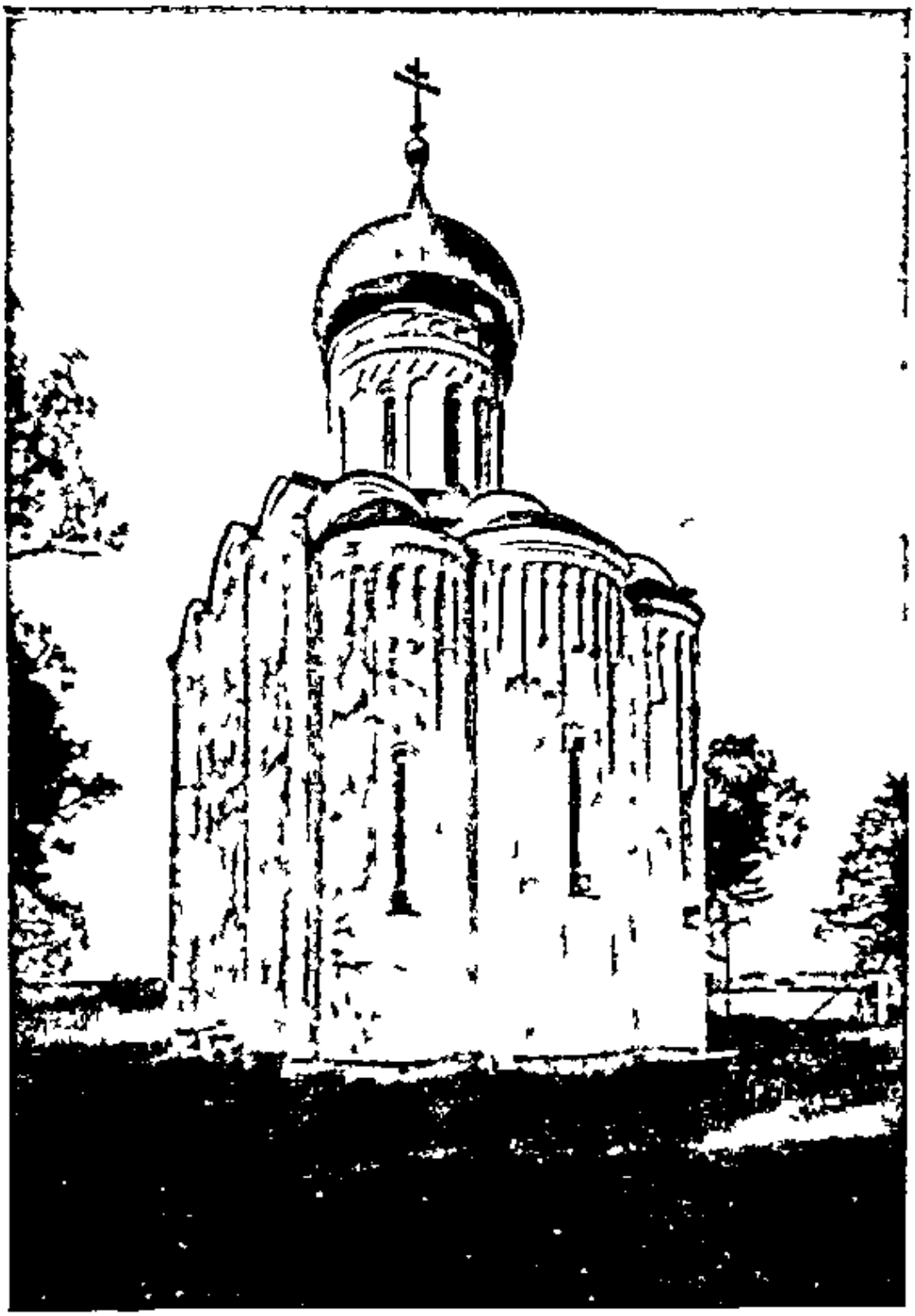
Boris Godunov	1598	1605	
The False Dmitri	1605	1606	
Vasili Ivanovich Shuyski.	1606		Time of troubles Polish war

ROMANOV DYNASTY

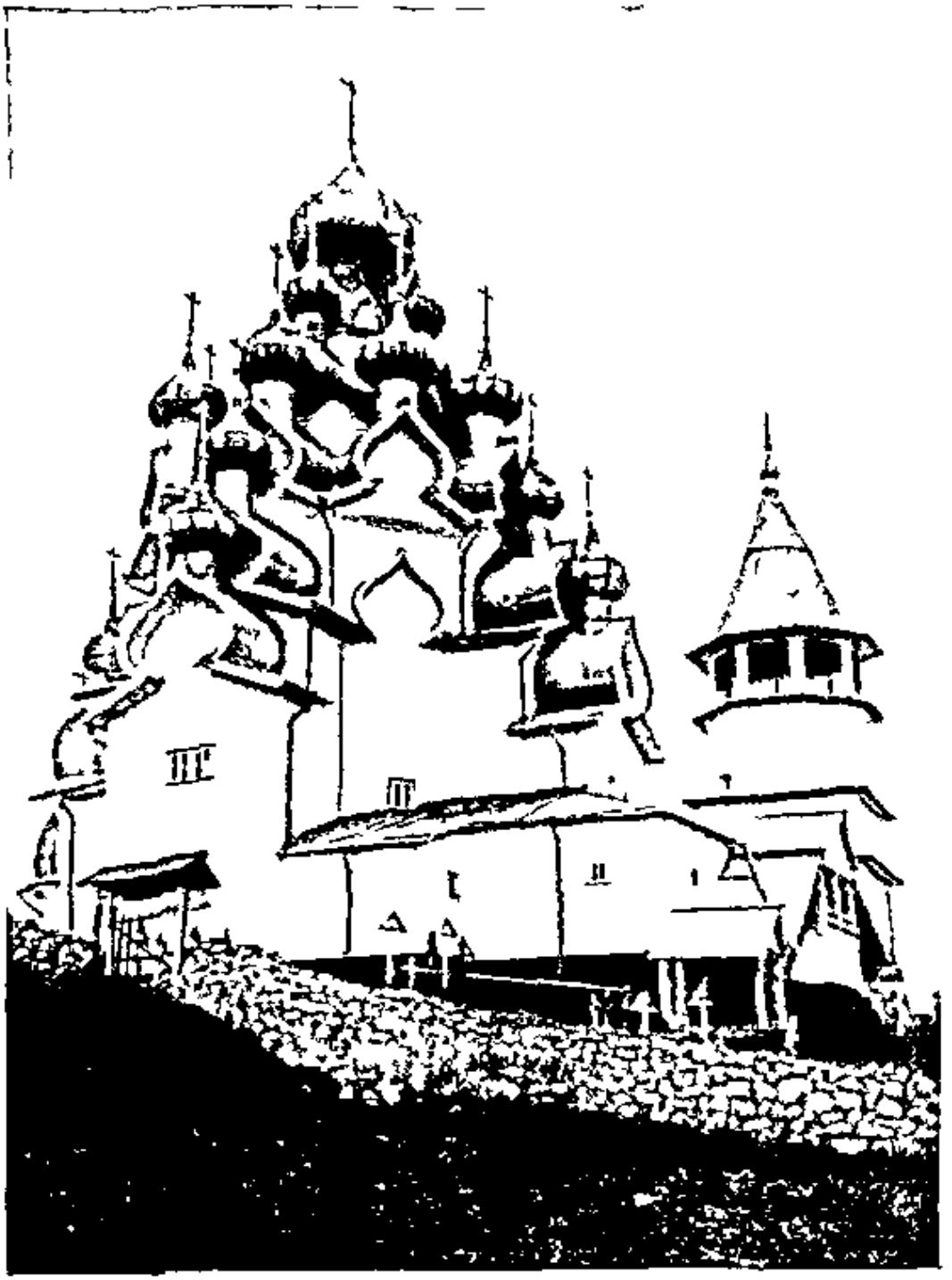
Mikhail Romanov	1613	1645	
Alexis I	1645	1676	
Fedor II	1676	1682	
Ivan V and his brother, Peter I The Great	1682	1725	Co-rulers under the regency o their sister Sophia who wa forced by Peter to withdra to a convent in 1689
			1703 Foundation of St Peter burg
Catherine I, widow of Peter the Great	1725	1727	
Peter II, grandson of Peter the Great	1727	1730	
Ann n ece of Peter the Great	1730	1740	
Ivan VI Grandnephew of Ann	1740	1741	
Elizabeth daughter of Peter the Great	1741	1761	
Peter III, nephew of Elizabeth	1761	1762	
Catherine II	1762	1796	
Paul I son of Catherine II	1796	1801	
Alexander I	1801	1825	
Nicolas I	1825	1855	
Alexander II The Liberator	1855	1881	1861, Emancipation of serfs
Alexander III	1881	1894	
Nicolas II	1894	1917	



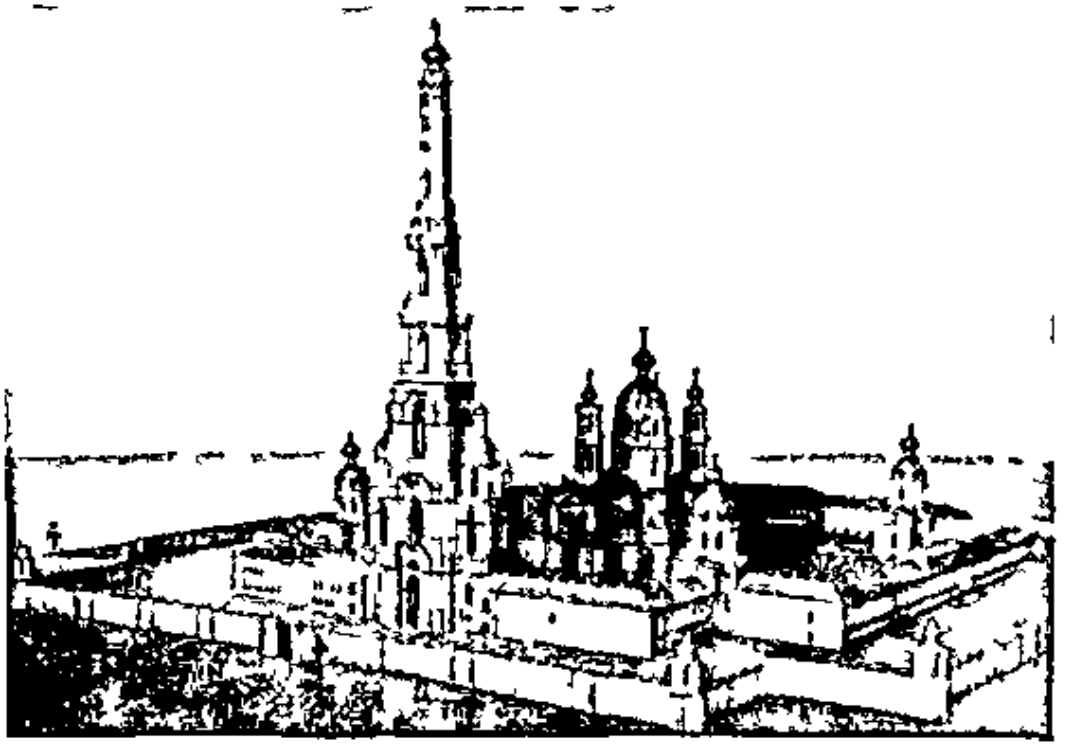
Virgin and Child, Umilenie. Late fifteenth century
(Zolotn tzky Collection)



Church of the Protection of the Virgin, on the Nerli River 1165

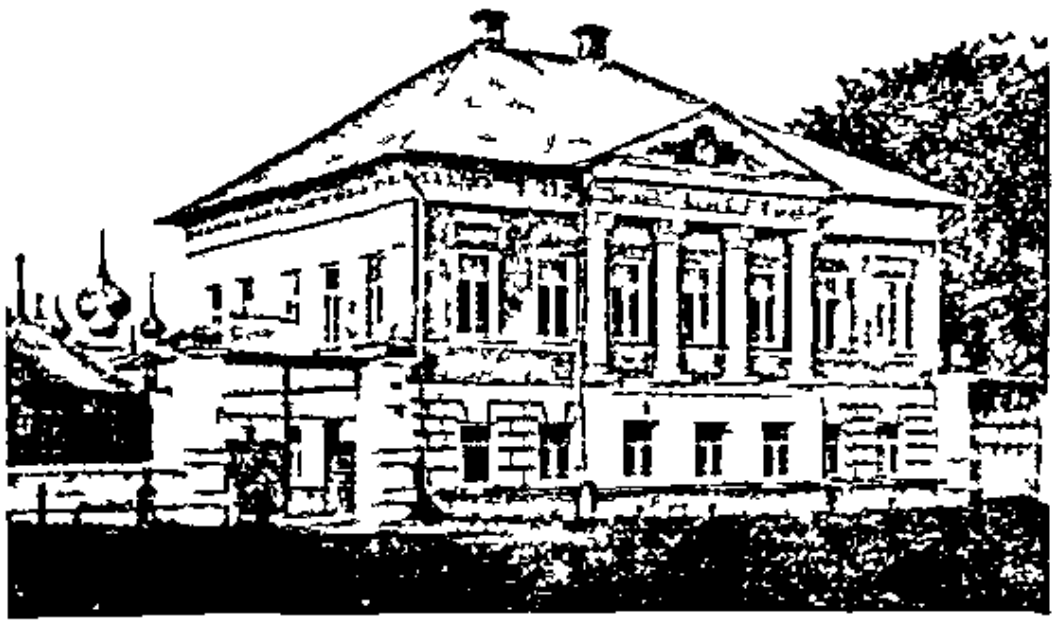


Wooden Church of the Transfiguration at Kiji Early eighteenth century



V Rastrelli

(*a*) Model for the Convent of Smolny 1749
(Academy, Leningrad)



(*b*) Country House near Rostov Second half of eighteenth century



D Levitski

Portrait of Mademoiselle Borschov 1776
(Peterhof Palace)



D Levitski

(*a*) Portrait of Ivan Ribeaupierre



T I Shubin

(*b*) Bust of P. Zavadovski. 1794
(Academy, Leningrad)

PLATE VI



K P Brullov

The Horsewoman 1832
(Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow)



K P Bryullov

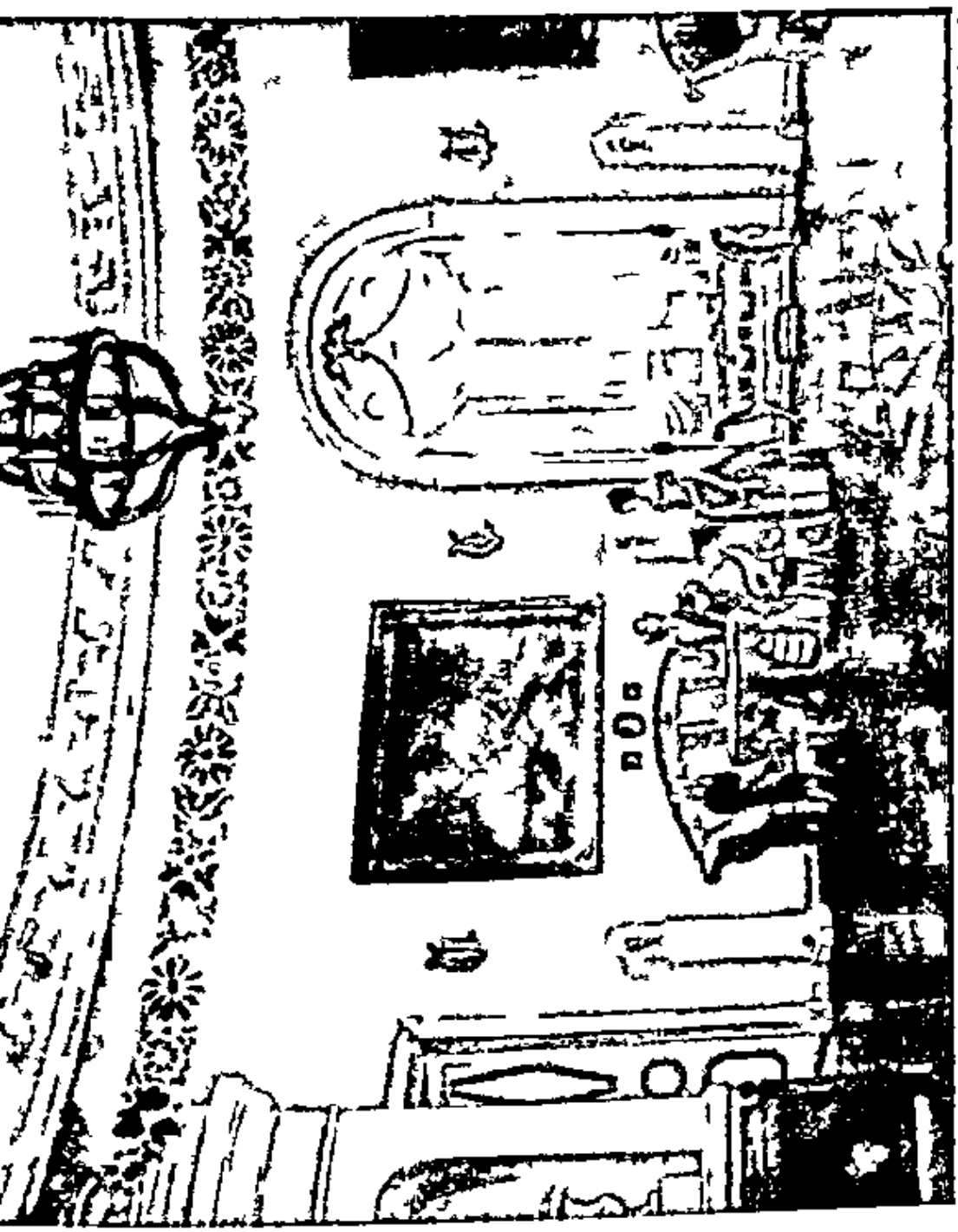
The Horsewoman 1832
(Tretiakov Gallery Moscow)



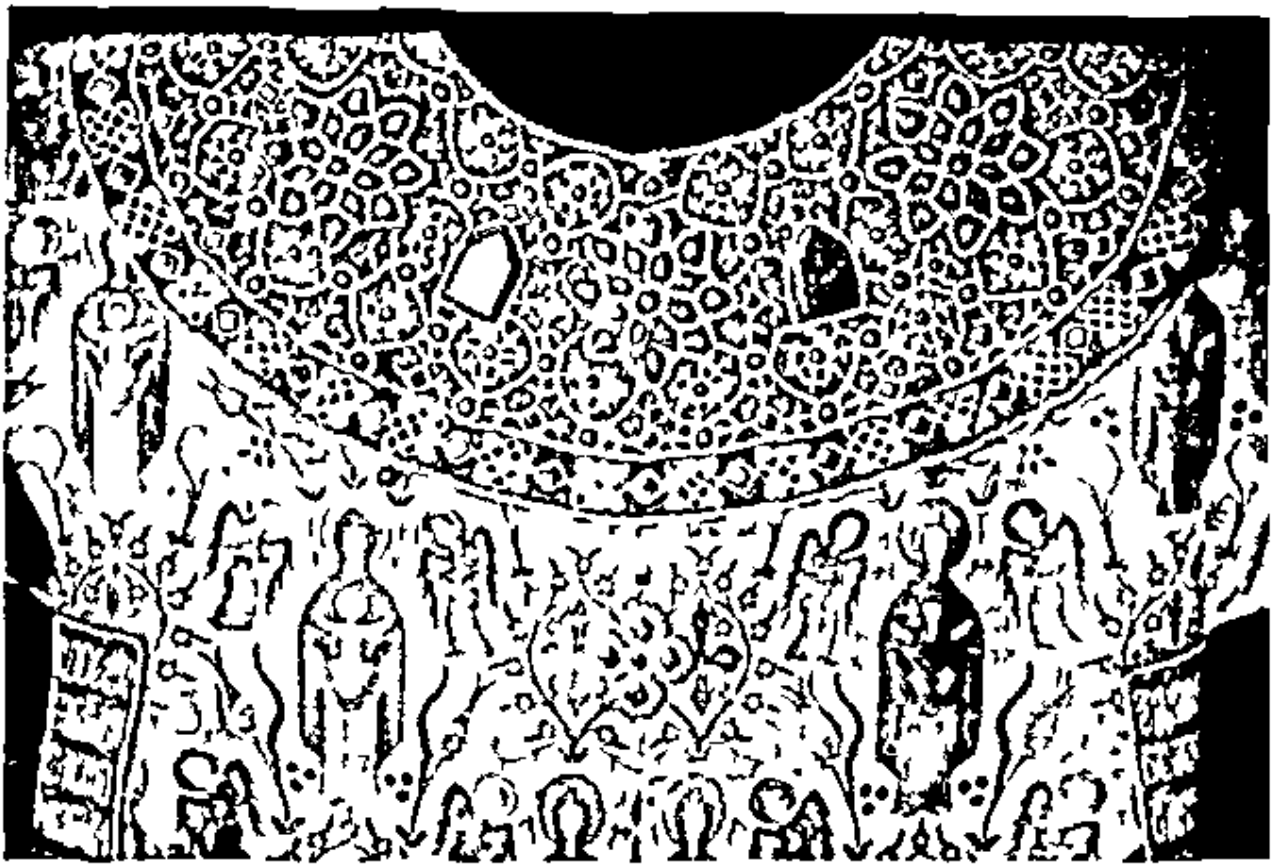
F. Alekseev

The Admiralty Quay, St Petersburg 1815

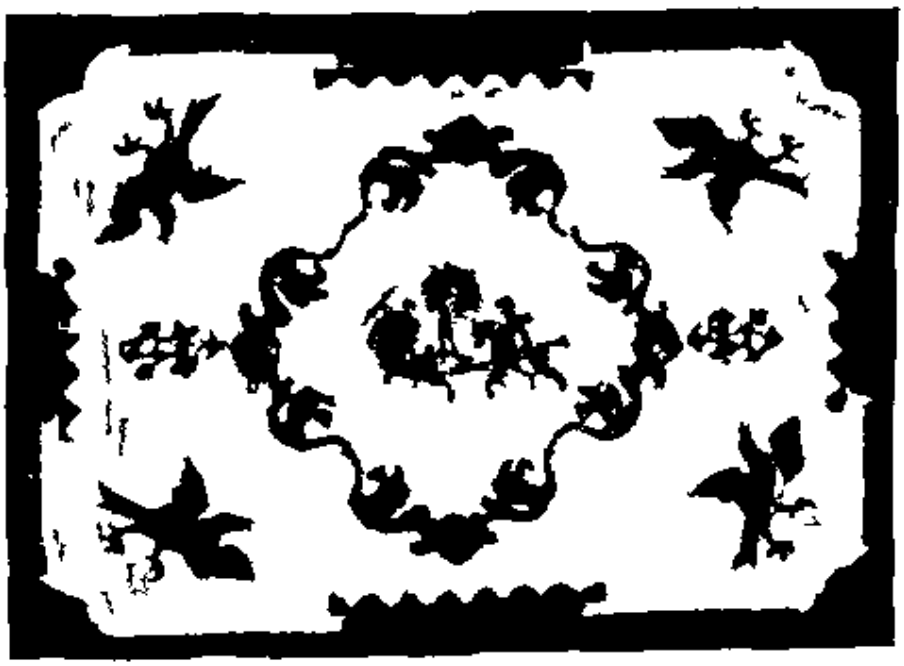
PLATE VIII



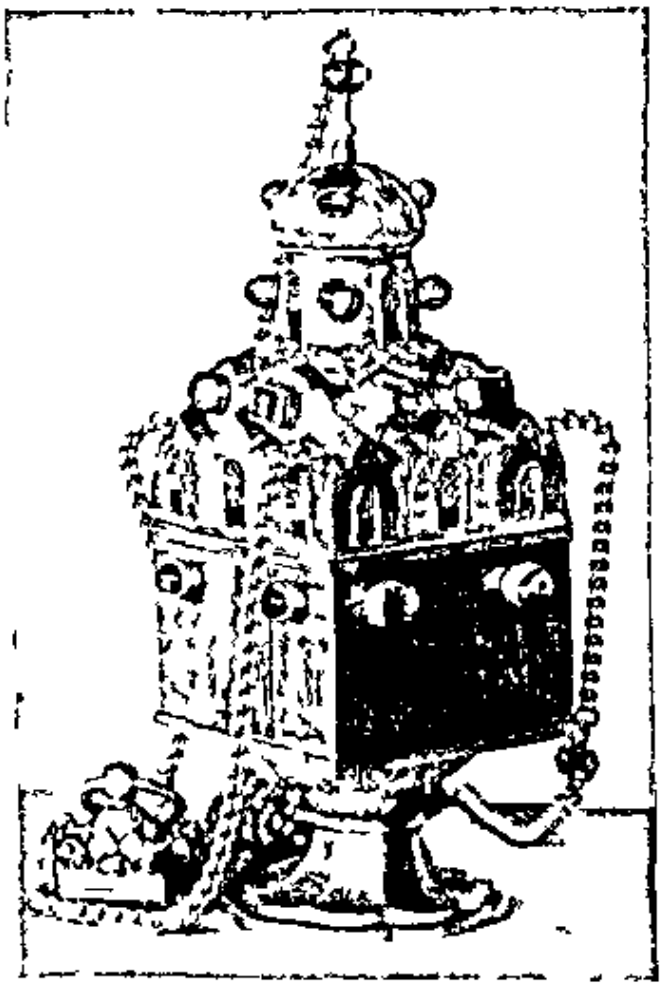
Setting for A Month in the Country



(*a*) Chasuble 1587 (Palace of Arms, Moscow)



(*b*) Tray, White Enamel, with Ornament in Silver Second half of the eighteenth century



(*a*) Gold Censer, dated 1598
(Victoria and Albert Museum)



(*b*) Enamel Bowl Second half of the seventeenth century
(Zolotnitzky Collection)

PLATE XI



Porcelain figures Imperial Factory c 1780



Porcelain Figures Imperial Factory *c* 1780

PLATE XII